



Homegrown National Park®

Developed by Doug Tallamy

LLPOA Lake Committee - 2023

[Homegrown National Park® by Doug Tallamy](https://www.homegrownnationalpark.org/about-us/)

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HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK® is a grassroots call-to-action to regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function by planting native plants and creating new ecological networks.

Homegrown National Park® is a term coined by Doug Tallamy, Professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware. *(For detailed explanations and photos read [The Living Landscape](#) by Rick Dark and Doug Tallamy.)*

“Our National Parks, no matter how grand in scale, are too small and separated from one another to preserve species to the levels needed. Thus, the concept for Homegrown National Park, a bottom-up call-to-action to restore habitat where we live and work, and to a lesser extent where we farm and graze, extends national parks to our yards and communities.”

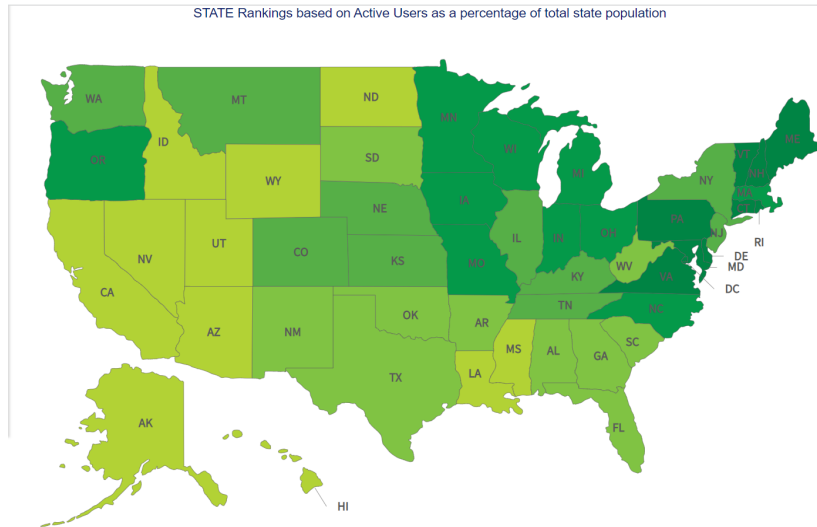
- **OUR MISSION** - to regenerate biodiversity and ecosystem function because every human being on this planet needs diverse highly productive ecosystems to survive.
- **CALL TO ACTION** - Catalyzing a collective effort of individual homeowners, property owners, land managers, farmers, and anyone with some soil to plant in...to start a new HABITAT® by **planting native plants and removing most invasive plants**. It is the largest cooperative conservation project ever conceived or attempted.
- **OUR GOAL** - Our initial goal is 20 million acres of native plantings in the U.S. This represents approximately ½ of the green lawns of privately-owned properties.
- **TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE** - We are at a critical point of losing so many species from local ecosystems that their ability to produce the oxygen, clean water, flood control, pollination, pest control, carbon storage, etc, that is, the ecosystem services that sustain us, will become seriously compromised. This is a **Solution Based Action** - small efforts by many people. Together we will create new ecological networks that will enlarge populations of plants and animals enabling them to weather normal population fluctuations indefinitely.

- **THE MAP** - The Map is an interactive community-based visual that will show each person's contribution to planting native by State, County and Zip Code.
 - <https://map.homegrownnationalpark.org/>

Native Plantings United States

Land Area Acres 2,260,419,453.50
 Count of all Users 33,926.00
 Active States 51.00
 Number of Plantings 39,829.00
 Planted Area Acres 110,290.16
 Country Planting Goal 20 Million Acres
 2023 Planting Goal 125,000.00 Acres
 2023 % of Planting Goal

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%



Native Plantings Illinois

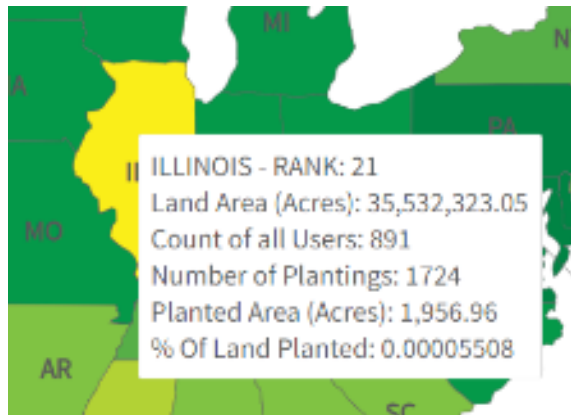
Land Area Acres 35,532,323.05
 Count of all Users 891
 Number of Plantings 1724
 Total Area of Plantings Acres 1,956.96

Native Plantings 50 Mile Radius

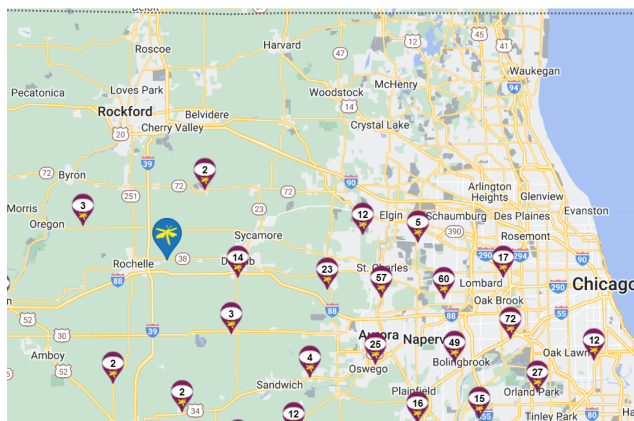
Data displayed here is based on your most recent map search.

Mile Radius

Count of all Users 68
 Number of Plantings 115
 Total area of Plantings Acres 50.01



Currently There Are No Contributors in Lake or McHenry Counties



Things To Do

<https://joegardener.com/podcast/why-plant-choices-matter-natures-best-hope-doug-tallamy/>

Action Step 1: Reduce lawn space

- Anytime a new subdivision goes up, the native plant life is torn out. If anything is planted on the newly-developed plot at all, it's typically an expanse of lawn and a few non-native plants. There is no attempt made to rebuild a little of the plant life ecosystem that had existed in that space. It's not that this restoration can't be done in tandem with development. It's just never taken into consideration.

Action Step 2: Remove Invasive Species

- The **invasive plants which are outcompeting beneficial native plants in our wild spaces are escapees from our gardens.** Odds are pretty good that you have at least one invasive species in your landscape. Identify and remove what's there to reduce their spread in your garden or beyond.

Action Step 3: Plant Keystone Species

- Native plants are much more beneficial in our landscapes than non-natives, but not all native plants are equal in their ability to support food webs. **Only 5% of all native plants provide about 75% of the important food sources on which food webs are built. These 5% are the keystone species. One example is the oak. In about 85% of North America, the oak tree supports more life than any other tree or shrub.**

Action Step 4: Be Generous with Plantings

- Have you ever noticed that, in nature, plants in wild spaces are all different heights? Under the tall trees, smaller tree species create a lower layer of foliage. Shrubs fill vertical space between the ground and the canopy of shorter trees. Meanwhile, ground covers and shorter perennials fill space beneath shrubs.

Action Step 5: Plant for Specialized Pollinators

- It's common knowledge now that honeybee populations are in jeopardy, but did you know honeybees aren't native to North America? That doesn't negate their value by any means, but it's important to be mindful of the 4,000 species of native bees (e.g., leaf cutter and mason bees) which are also on the decline.
- **Pollinators are failing because the plants that they rely on for pollen and nectar as a food source are being replaced by plants that provide pollinators little to no value.** These creatures often require specific plants to reproduce too.

Action Step 6: Network with Neighbors

- Not everyone has an acre or more to work with. If that's true for you, some of these action steps might seem out of reach, but these principles can be applied to an entire neighborhood too.
- When we all work together, we can achieve more. If your neighbor has an oak tree, you can focus on adding other keystone species that your neighbor doesn't have.

Action Step 7: Build a Conservation Hardscape

- We can become so focused on our plant life that we overlook the impact of our hardscape elements, like window wells. Lots of homes have these, but when they aren't covered, they become a hazard to creatures like toads and frogs which hop down and eventually starve to death. So if you can't cover the opening, place a large stick into the well that the wildlife can use to climb out.
- This is all about being mindful — taking a look around your property and giving thought to how certain areas or your habits might negatively **impact wildlife**.

Action Step 8: Create Caterpillar Pupation Sites

- **Many caterpillars spend part of their life in trees and shrubs, but they complete their life cycle underground or under cover of ground debris.**
- **Oak trees support over hundreds of species of caterpillars. Nearly all of them drop from the tree to bore into the ground for pupation or spin cocoons in leaf litter.** Unfortunately, we have a tendency to surround trees with lawn space that becomes hard, compacted, and difficult for the caterpillars to bore into.
- When we rake up leaf litter and other debris to keep our landscapes looking tidy, these habits mean many caterpillars die once they reach the ground, and fewer caterpillars means fewer food sources for birds.

Action Step 9: Don't Spray or Fertilize

- **Homeowners spray more insecticide per acre, on average, than the entire agricultural industry.** It has been ingrained in our culture that a healthy garden is a bug-free garden, when the opposite is true.
- **In the vast majority of cases, insecticide is just not necessary.** Most of those insects are good bugs, and most of the bad bugs will be defeated by the good bugs when we exercise a little patience and allow the natural order of things to work to our advantage.
- ***A healthy landscape is full of life – insect life. So, resist the urge to spray.***

Action Step 10: Educate Your Neighborhood Association

- Many of us must abide by HOA regulations that apply to our landscaping choices. Most of those rules were set or influenced by landscaping tastes of the 1970s & 1980s. Don't underestimate the value of introducing ecological insights to your HOA to begin a dialogue that could lead to changes or identifying some opportunity for compromise.

Information & Other Resources

- <https://www.homegrownnationalpark.org/>
- <https://www.udel.edu/canr/departments/entomology-and-wildlife-ecology/faculty-staff/doug-tallamy/>
- <https://wildseedproject.net/2016/03/in-the-shade-gardening-with-native-plants-from-the-woodland-understory/>
- <https://awaytogarden.com/the-garden-as-habitat-with-doug-tallamy/comment-page-15/>
- <https://joegardener.com/podcast/why-plant-choices-matter-natures-best-hope-doug-tallamy/>
- <https://crownbees.com/>