

# PLANT FOR AMERICA250



To celebrate America's 250th anniversary of independence in 2026, the City of Alexandria is commemorating America250 by encouraging residents and businesses to plant red, white, and blue native plants. These "patriotic gardens" were also planted in 1976.

The Beautification Commission hopes this effort will inspire local businesses to install pots of native plants at their entrances and residents to remove a small patch of grass and plant natives. With the City, we've set a challenge for at least 250 property owners to plant patriotic natives in the spring of 2026.

## WHITE

- White wood (or New England) aster (*Eurybia divaricata*)
- Virginia sweetspire (*Itea virginica*)
- White coneflower (*Echinacea*)
- White yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*)



## RED

- Wild or eastern red Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
- Cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
- Red trillium (*Trillium erectum*)
- Scarlet beebalm (*Monarda didyma*)
- Indian pink (*Spigelia marilandica*)



## BLUE

- Blue false indigo (*Baptisia australis*)
- Wild blue phlox (*Phlox divaricata*)
- Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*)
- Eastern blue star (*Amsonia tabernaemontana*)/blue ice
- Great blue lobelia/blue cardinal flower (*lobelia siphilitica*)
- Blue mist flower (*Conoclinium coelestinum*)
- Wild petunia (*Ruellia*)
- Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium atlanticum*)
- Giant hyssop/hummingbird mint (*Agastache*)



# BENEFITS OF NATIVE PLANTS

- **Low maintenance & less expensive** to maintain – Hardier and self-sufficient plants after they take root. Spend less time mowing, fertilizing, and watering.
- **Minimize need for pesticides and fertilizer** – Fertilizers and pesticides are not only costly, but can also harm local wildlife and contaminate drinking water.
- **Drought-resistant** – Because they are adapted to the regional climate, native plants require far less water than non-natives, saving both money and water.
- **Support your vegetable garden** – Natives attract beneficial insects that help control pests, protect your vegetable garden, and improve crop yields.
- **Help stabilize soil and control erosion** because many natives, including grasses, have deep, complex root systems.
- **Help filter stormwater**, reduce runoff and purify water that replenishes aquifers.
- **Reduce the heat island effect.** Strategically-placed native trees and shrubs can reduce ambient temperatures and save homeowners on energy costs.



Visit the Virginia Cooperative Extension at [ext.vt.edu](http://ext.vt.edu) and search for "patriotic gardens" for more information.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: ALEXANDRIAVA.GOV/BEAUTIFICATION**