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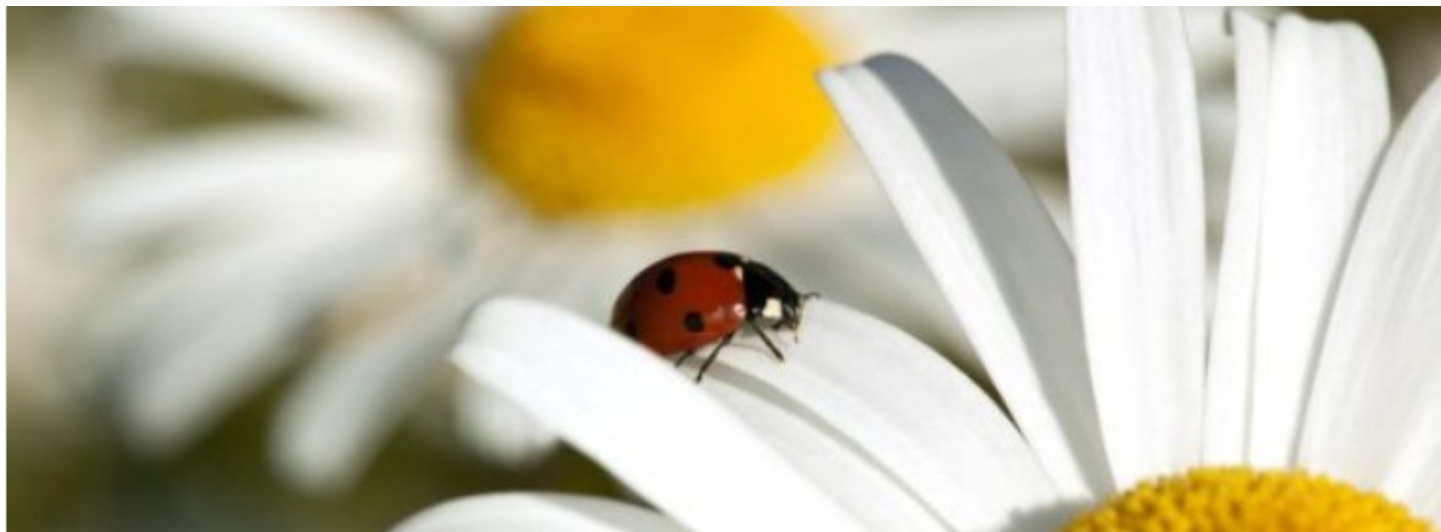
NATIVARS and Heavy LITERS in the Garden | Earth911.com

August 23, 2018

Thursday, August 23 2018, 3:59 PM

Nativars and Heavy Lifters in the Garden

Gemma Alexander August 20, 2018



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Native plants in nurseries are often hybrids, native species crossed with ornamental cultivars. While beautiful, they may not fulfill the ecological role of a true native in the garden. Even among native species, there are usually a few key plants that do the environmental heavy lifting, providing food and shelter to most of the local fauna. Get to know the nativars that can lift your garden's environmental profile.

The right plant for each spot in your landscape depends on your goals, but you can maximize your ecological benefits by thinking about how each plant contributes to the landscape as a whole.

Nativars

Hybrid cultivars of native plants are often called nativars. These plants are often showier than true natives, with double or more colorful flowers or variegated leaves. However, the same elements that make them more visually attractive in human landscapes can make them less useful to pollinators. Even if they don't fulfill the ecological role of a true native, they are often better adapted to local temperature and rainfall patterns than exotic species. This makes them valuable for low maintenance gardens with a strong regional aesthetic.

