



Natural COMMUNITIES

of native plants are those related to their site and vary by region.

Using the resources at hand they evolved over thousands of years. They worked **with the site's soils, sunlight, moisture, and wildlife**. Together, they created functional ecosystems we call natural communities.

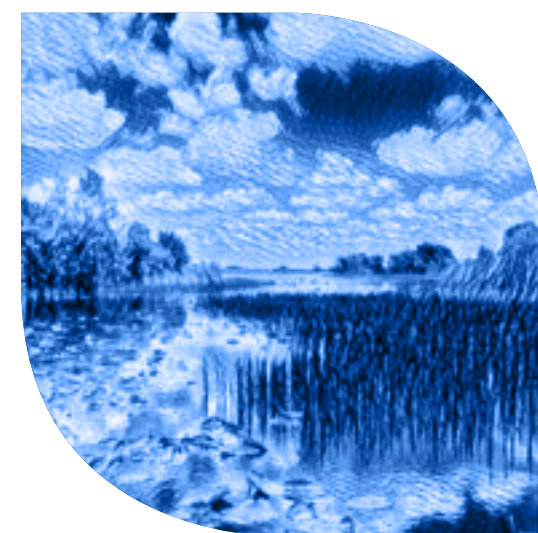
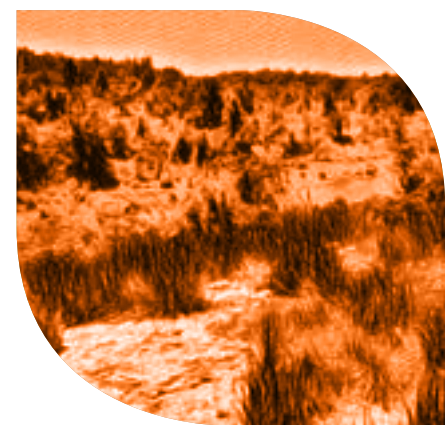
Something wonderful happens when we use the **inspiration of natural plant communities**. For example, a site with consistently moist soil can use **wetland** plants. **Glade** plants are at home in droughty sites with shallow soils. The **prairie's** expanses of grasses and perennials can inspire a no-mow meadow on an open site. Or, add trees and shrubs to mimic a **forest** or **savanna**.

Native plants of a natural community are resilient. They become **landscape workhorses in settings with similar light and moisture needs**. In fact, they **embrace a site's challenges as desired features**.

Together, **native plants help us create a greener world**.

A natural community's plants work together to create a functional ecosystem.

PHOTO BY HENRY DOMKE



Natural COMMUNITIES



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FOREST

natural community

Vital to life, forests **purify our air, filter our water, and prevent erosion**. They help **store carbon**, and act as a buffer against climate change.

Forests may be composed of large, canopy forming **trees**. Or it may have scattered trees with a patchwork of plant communities. The **many layers of plants** include understory trees, shrubs, ferns, and shade-loving perennials.

Combine trees and shrubs for **layers of seasonal interest on large acreages**.



Forests are home to more than half of the world's land-based species of animals, plants, and insects.

PHOTO BY HENRY DOMKE

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
Acer rubrum	red maple
Acer saccharum	sugar maple
Carpinus caroliniana	american hornbeam
Carya cordiformis	bitternut hickory
Carya ovata	shagbark hickory
Cladrastis kentukea	yellowwood
Cornus florida	flowering dogwood
Hydrangea arborescens	wild hydrangea
Liriodendron tulipifera	tulip poplar
Nyssa sylvatica	black gum
Quercus alba	white oak
Quercus bicolor	swamp white oak
Quercus macrocarpa	bur oak
Tilia americana	american linden



Natural COMMUNITIES

help us rebuild ecological abundance.

Designing with **plant communities** helps create **resilient, emotionally resonant** outdoor environments. Rich and full of **biodiversity**, these **partnership landscapes are sustainable**. And they help us **restore the earth's ecosystems**.

Forest, wetland, prairie, savanna, glade. Each natural community offers **seasonal beauty and supports wildlife**. Places where we **connect with nature** and can celebrate that connection.

Beyond ecological support, **high-performance natives** can also match **site goals**. They can **reduce maintenance, control erosion, and filter stormwater**. They **work well together** and **hold up under pressures** of climate, pests, and diseases.



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Thanks for helping us make the earth a little greener.

GLADE

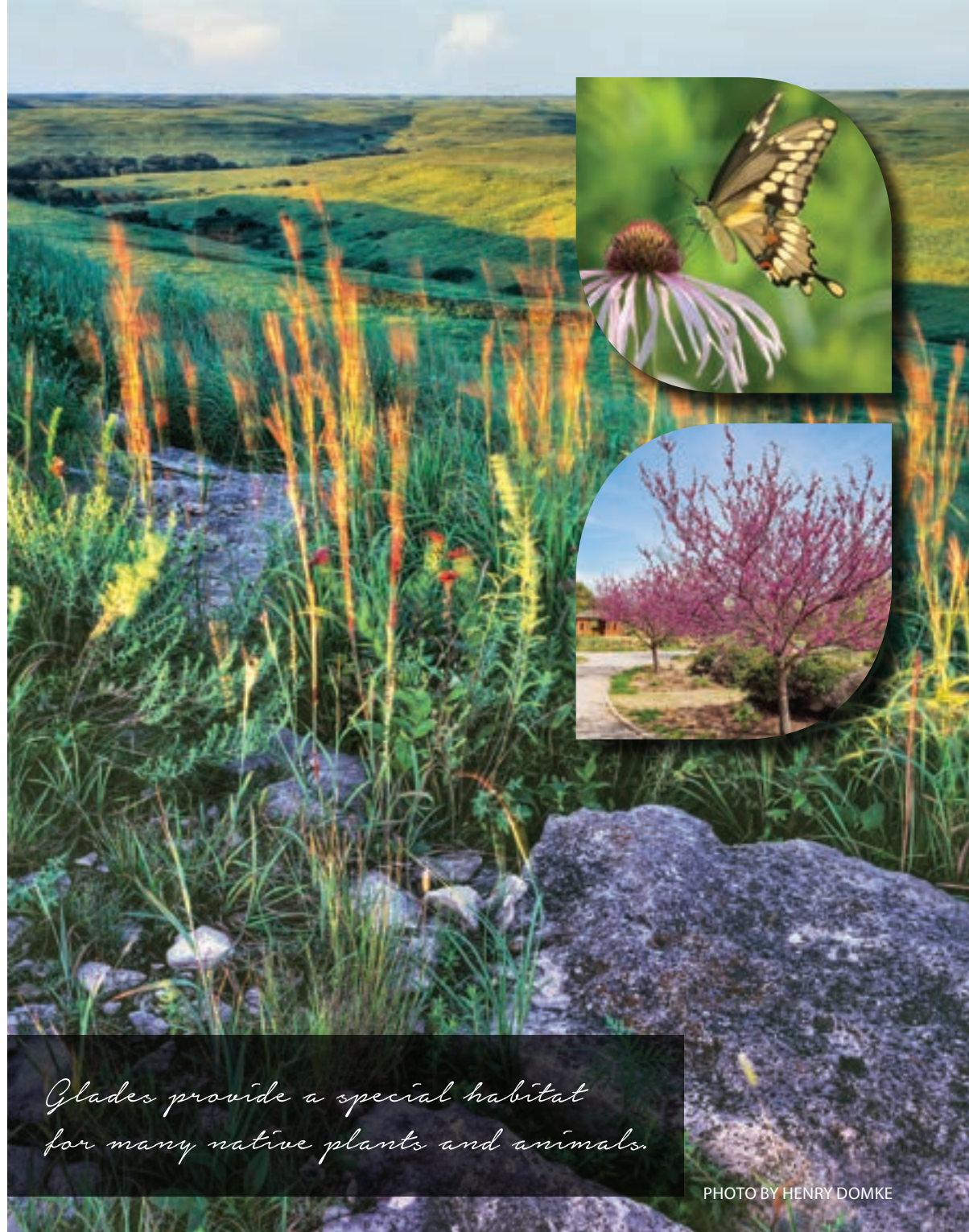
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Periodic fires and wildlife influence the glade's **sparse and unique vegetation**. **Drought tolerant perennials and low- to medium-height grasses** combine in this resilient community. A few trees and shrubs also thrive in this environment.

Glades are **open, sunny areas with shallow soils** over bedrock at the edge of woodlands. You'll find glades in the Ozarks on steep south and west-facing slopes, or hilltops known as 'balds'. Its harsh environment **provides the only habitat to many native plants and animals**.

Lend the **dramatic beauty** of glades to **sunny, dry, low maintenance areas**. This unique ecosystem can inspire **modern, urban** landscapes.

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
Amorpha canescens	leadplant
Cercis canadensis	eastern redbud
Coreopsis lanceolata	lanceleaf coreopsis
Echinacea pallida	pale purple coneflower
Liatris aspera	rough blazing star
Oenothera macrocarpa	missouri primrose
Quercus marilandica	blackjack oak
Quercus stallata	post oak
Schizachyrium scoparium	little bluestem
Sporobolus heterolepis	prairie dropseed
Symphotrichum oblongifolium	aromatic aster
Rhus copallina	flameleaf sumac



Glades provide a special habitat for many native plants and animals.

PHOTO BY HENRY DOMKE

PRAIRIE

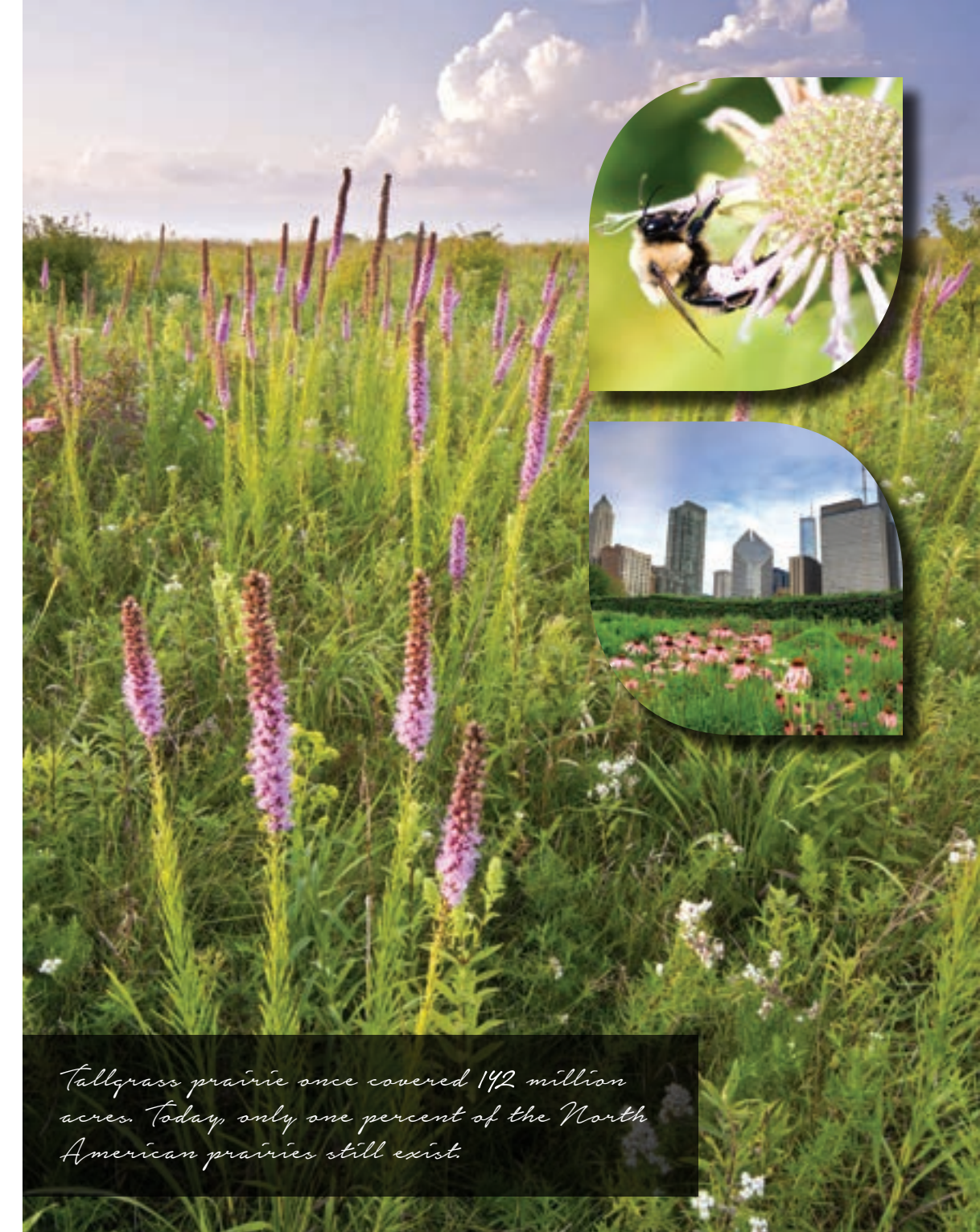
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Prairies evolved with **North America's Midwest climate and wildlife** over centuries. The **extensive deep roots of native prairie plants channel water and nutrients deep into the soil**. This can help reduce stormwater erosion and improve water quality. These plants provide **habitat** for many birds, pollinators, and other small wildlife.

Full sun, low-height grasses and sedges, and long vistas characterize prairies. With less than 10% trees, the prairie landscape emphasizes **bold shapes**. Perennial wildflower drifts and woody shrubs masses can create **seasonal diversity**. Prairies can be **dry, moist, or wet**.

A prairiescape can be a **cost-saving alternative to broad lawn expanses and rights-of-way**. Once established, prairies need little maintenance and are long lasting.

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
Aster novae-angliae	new england aster
Baptisia australis	blue false indigo
Echinacea pallida	pale purple coneflower
Echinacea purpurea	purple coneflower
Eryngium yuccifolium	rattlesnake master
Liatris pycnostachya	blazing star or gayfeather
Monarda fistulosa	wild bergamot
Ratibida pinnata	grey-headed coneflower
Rudbeckia hirta	black-eyed susan
Vernonia fasciculata	prairie ironweed



Tallgrass prairie once covered 142 million acres. Today, only one percent of the North American prairies still exist.



SAVANNA

natural community

Savannas **provide essential habitat for many plant and animal species**. Managed grazing with up to 12 cattle per acre, for two to three days per month can reduce the shrub layer in oak savanna. It can also **provide nutritional grazing and shade for cattle**.

Midwest oak savannas form a transition between the Great Plains and eastern forests. The bur oak is the dominant species in northern oak savannas. In the south, there are more black oak or chinkapin oak.

This upland landscape **offers wide spaced, open grown trees**. Under the trees is an herbaceous, prairie-like understory. The understory can be a mix of grasses, perennials, and small trees or shrubs.

The savanna is an ideal inspiration for large, sunny urban and suburban landscapes.

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
Amelanchier spp.	serviceberry
Carya ovata	shagbark hickory
Ceanothus americanus	new jersey tea
Cercis canadensis	redbud
Prunus serotina	black cherry
Quercus alba	white oak
Quercus macrocarpa	bur oak
Quercus muehlenbergii	chinkapin oak
Quercus velutina	black oak
Quercus rubra	red oak
Quercus velutina	black oak
Viburnum dentatum	arrowwood viburnum

Midwest oak savannas form a transition between the Great Plains and eastern forests.

PHOTO BY HENRY DOMKE



Wetlands provide a home to at least one third of all threatened and endangered species.

WETLAND

natural community

These systems offer a **rich system** of plants and wildlife. Wetlands enhance **water quality, control erosion, and mitigate the destruction of flood waters**. They provide a **home to at least one third of all threatened and endangered species**.

Wetlands may be permanently or seasonally **flooded sites**. This saturation creates oxygen-deprived soils. A variety of native species thrive on wetland soils that can be both wet and dry. Because of this, wetland woody plants also perform well on compacted urban soils.

Native wetland plants can form the nucleus of a **pond garden, bioswale or rain garden**. Native plants have extensive root systems. When used in bioswales and rain gardens, those **roots filter stormwater**. This helps **remove pollutants** before entering our water table.

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME
Aronia melanocarpa	black chokeberry
Asclepias incarnata	swamp milkweed
Betula nigra	river birch
Carex stricta	tussock sedge
Cephalanthus occidentalis	buttonbush
Cornus amomum	silky dogwood
Lobelia siphilitica	blue cardinal flower
Nyssa sylvatica	black gum
Quercus bicolor	swamp white oak
Quercus lyrata	overcup oak
Quercus phellos	willow oak
Quercus texana	nuttall oak
Taxodium distichum	bald cypress