**Caring for Creation News**

Spring in Chicago is the season of hope: warm weather is coming, the Cubs are winning, and flowers are blooming, encouraging us to plant the garden of our dreams. So while you’re planning your trip to the garden center, consider selecting native plants this year.

Why should we use native plants? The best reason is that they are beautiful! Many of our familiar garden plants are natives. Think of Virginia Bluebell flowers and Redbud trees blooming in the spring, Purple Coneflower and Black-Eyed Susan flowers in the summer, and Goldenrod flowers in the fall. There are many other native trees, shrubs, and flowers that deserve a place in our gardens, not just for their beauty, but because of other benefits to God’s creation. Here are a few more reasons you’ll want to add native plants to your garden:

* Native plants provide food and habitat for wildlife. You’ll attract butterflies & birds to your yard.
* Natives don’t require chemical fertilizers or pesticides.
* Natives don’t require frequent watering, once established, saving you time and money.
* Natives are easy to grow and maintain, provided that you match the plant to your garden conditions (sun vs shade, moist or dry soil).
* By using native plants, you won’t spread invasive species, which are a major threat to native habitats.

Many local garden centers carry native plants. Check [www.naturalgardennatives.com](http://www.naturalgardennatives.com) for a list, plus tips on adding native plants to your garden. The DuPage County Forest Preserve is holding a native plant sale on May 8 and 9 at Mayslake Peabody Estate in Oak Brook.

Native plants – a great way to care for God’s creation!