SOW YOU KNOW: HELPFUL GARDENING INFO!

By Rebecca Crutchfield Crow (edited 4/22/26)

As a Master Gardener who regularly does residential site visits, I rely on these tools. Many have been mentioned in previous Sow You Know posts, some however are new, but here they are – all in one place.

1) **PictureThis** – a reliable plant identifier app available for iPhone or Android phones. (Free trial period, then monthly or annual payment options.) https://www.picturethisai.com
2) **Rutgers Deer Resistant Plants database** – https://njaes.rutgers.edu/deer-resistant-plants/ Before you buy, check here first to see if it's a deer favorite!
3) **Native Plants for Virginia's Capital Region** – Native trees, shrubs, perennials, grasses and ferns loved by butterflies and caterpillars with their water/sun requirements. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58e25c41e6f2e17ea4cb7766/t/5ed00bfcb208c2251311ebc6/1590692887078/Native+Plants+for+Virginia%27s+Capital+Region+Guide+for+download.pdf
4) The Virginia Native Plant Society's **native plant nursery list**: https://vnps.org/native-plant-nursery-list/
5) **Sandy's Plants-Advanced Search** – Free plant website landscaping tool https://www.sandysplants.com/Plant-Finder.
6) **Smart Lawn form & instructions** (Goochland residents only). $20 fee for Virginia Tech lab report and recommendations for great-looking lawns. https://goochland.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/goochland_ext_vt_edu/files/smartlawn/2019%20GP%20SMART%20Lawn%20Enrollment-Brochure.pdf
7) **Soil Test forms** and kits for lawns, gardens, fruit trees and ornamentals may be picked up at either Goochland or Powhatan Extension Offices. $10 fee for Virginia Tech Lab report with results and recommendations. https://www.soiltest.vt.edu/content/dam/soiltest_vt_edu/PDF/urban-sampling.pdf, Information form: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/452/452-125/SPES-322.pdf
8) **Plant Disease Diagnosis** – Form and instructions on how to submit samples to VA Tech Lab for plant diagnosis and treatment recommendations ($35): https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/dam/pubs_ext_vt_edu/450/450-097/SPES-361.pdf.
9) **Pollinator native plant collections for Virginia** curated by Dr. Doug Tallamy, for sale online or shop locally. https://gardenforwildlife.com/collections/native-plants-for-virginia
10) **Arbor Day Foundation's Best Tree Finder** – Tree Wizard helps select the best tree to plant https://www.arborday.org/shopping/trees/treewizard/Intro.cfm
11) **Buy Trees from the VA Dept of Forestry Seedling Store -** https://buyvatrees.com/virginia-trees/
12) **Water Runoff and Rain Garden Installations** – Schedule a free site visit with VCAP. You can even apply to have a percentage of the installation paid by them! Go to VCAP https://vaswcd.org/landowner-vcap-landing/ Contact VCAP Coordinator Blair Blanchette at blair.blanchette@vaswcd.org for more details.
13) **Virginia Tech Extension's Home Grounds & Animals 2025 Pest Management** resource: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/456/456-018/456-018.html
14) **Native Plants Species and Cultivars (video)**– Master Gardeners of Northern VA discuss Mt. Cuba data on which plant varieties attract the most pollinators. https://mgnv.org/mg-virtual-classroom/native-plant-species-cultivars-2024/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR0z1gYNOR3Aj5yfJLia2K3MxYr0FDDk5m9epuRZWjfY6rDibKrLIvS7J1w_aem_1uFeCZfUT29GnHZARPA00w
    https://mtcubacenter.org/research/trial-garden/ Search Trial Garden results for best preforming plants.
15) **www.chicagobotanic.org** (Click on this link then type in Plant Evaluation in the search box. Plant evaluation notes listed at the bottom for top performing plants.
16) National Wildlife Federation Native Plant Finder – a list of native plants in your zip code, ranked by the number of butterfly and moth species they support.
17) **Virginia Invasive Plant Coalition Plant ID & Control Tool** https://airtable.com/appwozPe5WRrJ9Djh/shr8iwTNolTZzLxf0/tblQWzBW2uuV3Z19e

To request a FREE Master Gardener residential Site Visit for your Goochland or Powhatan home, discuss plant problems or submit photos showing your plant concerns, email gpmastergardener@gmail.com **Sow You Know** is a weekly gardening tip written by Goochland Powhatan Master Gardeners. Watch our Facebook every Monday for timely news you can use.