

NATIVE LOW GROWING SHRUBS:

Lowbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*) 1-2'
full/part shade & full sun flowers; fruits attract birds;
scarlet fall color, good ground cover

Maple Leaf Viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*) 3-6'
full/part shade & full sun
fruits attract birds; attractive foliage, good fall color

Steeplebush (*Spiraea tomentosa*) 4'
full/part shade & full sun spires of pink flowers

Sweetfern (*Comptonia peregrina*) 2-4'
full/part shade & full sun
gray green aromatic fern-like leaves

Pasture juniper (*Juniperus communis*) 1-4'
full sun foliage, good ground cover

Rhodora Azalea (*Rhododendron canadense*) 3-4'
full sun very showy rose purple flowers

Sweet Gale (*Myrica gale*) 2-4'
full sun aromatic foliage

A WORD ABOUT FERTILIZERS:

Plants need a number of nutrients to flourish: nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium.

Nitrogen is associated with lush vegetative growth

Phosphorus is needed for flowering and fruiting

Potassium is necessary for structure and durability

These nutrients end up feeding algae and noxious weeds if they end up in the lake. The goal is to maintain nutrients in the soil **and** keep them out of our lake. Phosphorus is of the most concern.

Use phosphorus-free fertilizers along with slow-release nitrogen. Fertilizer bags show three numbers; make sure the middle number is 0. Phosphorus-free fertilizers are available at the following locations:

*Amesbury Industrial Supply, 24 High Street, Amesbury
Eastern Lumber, 67 Haverhill Rd (Rte 110), Amesbury
Harbor Garden Center, 53 Bridge St (Rte 1), Salisbury*

The BEST fertilizer? Leave grass clippings on the lawn – they are largely nitrogen and a cheap fertilizer!

WHAT IS THE LAKE ATTITASH ASSOCIATION?

The Lake Attitash Association (LAA) was formed in 1993 to develop and encourage activities, improvements, and responsible behavior on Lake Attitash and in its watershed for the best interests of residents and visitors, and to preserve the aesthetic, environmental, and recreational values of the lake.

LAA is a non-profit organization managed by volunteers. Any person, family or business interested in supporting the goals of the association is welcome to join.

WHAT IS THE LAA DOING?

Our volunteers are:

- Pursuing major nutrient-loading sources
- Performing water quality tests
- Running weed-watchers events; identifying weeds and determining how to control growth
- Securing grants
- Educating residents and town officials about the situation on the lake
- Spearheading community activities like the Grand Illumination Boat Parade
- Trying to carry out many more tasks with too few volunteers

VOLUNTEER!

Volunteer to help on the Lake Attitash Association. You may be interested in the weed control committee, water quality committee, education committee, grant committee, social activity committee or other areas of interest.

We need your help and enthusiasm. There are many more things that need to be done.

Please help us help our lake.

2010

Buffer Gardens & Native Plants



www.LakeAttitash.org

Lake Attitash is overloaded with nutrients. This is obvious from the extensive plant and weed growth, algae bloom, and fish kill that we experienced last summer. Nobody likes the green scum that appeared in the water in 2009.

There are easy steps that lake homeowners can take to help prevent future lake closures.

Read on to learn how you can contribute to the health of our lake by making a few

Attitash means "blueberry"

in the Abenaki Indian language. The Abenaki are a division of the Algonquian nation. There are 12,000 Abenaki living in New England, Quebec and the Maritimes.

BUFFER GARDENS

A buffer garden is a planted area along the lake that functions to filter runoff, capture pollutants before they reach the lake, and provide wildlife habitat. A buffer garden is a “living filter”.

Storm water run off is the single largest contributor to water quality degradation in Massachusetts. Pollutants carried by run off that cause the most concern are sediment, nutrients and pathogens, all three of which can be captured by a buffer garden.

Major pollutants from home gardens and lawns include:

Fertilizers Pet Droppings
Pesticides

Major pollutants from driveways & roads include:

Sand Salt
Oil Antifreeze

Benefits of buffer gardens to the environment:

Capture pollution
Provide wildlife habitat (turtles, birds)

Benefits to the homeowner:

Erosion control
Wildlife attraction
Goose barrier (see below)

Considerations for homeowners when planning a buffer garden:

Maintain accessibility to lake
Maintain view of lake
Provide color throughout growing season
Low maintenance

Goose Barrier:

Geese like to have a wide, unobstructed view and close and easy access to the water to escape predators. Although lawns are a favorite food, geese will not travel through tall grasses or dense vegetation to get to food. Buffer gardens keep them off your lawn!

HOW TO PLAN YOUR BUFFER GARDEN:

Draw a site map noting structures, driveway, walkways, frontage and areas of activity, trees and other vegetation.

Observe runoff patterns on your property during a heavy rainstorm and note the problem areas. Even segments of a buffer will help.

Consider harsh winter winds that blow across your property that can dry out the leaves or needles of evergreens (mountain laurel, pines, spruce). What you already have growing in undeveloped areas around your property are helpful indicators of the type of plants that will succeed.

The deeper the root system of plants, the better the chances of capturing soluble nutrients and other pollutants in subsurface flow.

Before starting to dig, lay out plants to ensure there are enough, with the right spacing. Spacing may vary, but generally plant them at least 3 feet apart ... leaving room to grow without crowding. The space in-between can be planted with ferns, flowers or groundcover during the early years.

All new plants require some artificial watering during the first growing season, but when planting in the very early spring or fall when the environment is cool and moist requires far less watering than planting during the warm growing season. In addition, planting in the early spring or fall, when growing processes are shut down, will give plants time to acclimate to their new surroundings.

Even just creating a “no mow” zone along the lake will allow a more diverse mix of vegetation to grow!

Other suggestions to protect our lake:

Re-vegetate bare and eroded areas

Replace concrete or blacktop surfaces with bricks or stones that allow some infiltration through the cracks

Replace dirt pathways with grass

NATIVE GROUND COVERS:

Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) 1' full sun
handsome foliage, good groundcover

Virginia Creeper – sun, full/part shade
grows low along ground, up trees, fences, rock walls

Bunchberry / Creeping Dogwood (*Cornus canadensis*)
6" full/part shade. berries attracts birds
showy white spring flowers, red summer berries,
purplish fall color. Excellent ground cover

Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*) 4"
full/part shade flowers, fruits, glossy aromatic foliage

Partridge Berry (*Mitchella repens*) 2"
full/part shade
white flowers in June, red berries late summer-fall

Christmas Fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) 1'
full/part shade evergreen ground cover; glossy foliage

Cinnamon Fern (*Osmunda cinnamomea*) 3-4'
full/part shade handsome foliage; cinnamon-colored
fertile fronds

Sensitive Fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*) 2' full/part shade
fertile fronds used in dried arrangements

NATIVE PERENNIALS:

Blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium*) 1' full sun
stiff, grass-like with blue-violet flowers

Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*) 1-2' full sun
early yellow flowers

Wild lupine (*Lupinus perennis*) 1-3' full sun
purple-blue flower spires in June; pretty foliage

Daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*) 1-4' full sun
white ray flower with yellow center attracts butterflies

Cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) 2-4' full sun
brilliant red flowers attracts hummingbirds

Blue Flag Iris (*Iris versicolor*) 1-3' full sun
showy purple-blue flowers in late spring

Pennsylvania Sedge (*Carex pennsylvanica*) 2' full sun
forms low turf on sunny dry soils

Jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*) 1-3' full/part shade & full sun
orange flowers in summer; hummingbirds, butterflies

Foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*) 1' full/part shade
small star-like flowers in a loose spike

Twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*) 6" full/part shade
trailing plant; white and pink flowers

Harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*) 1' full/part shade
delicate with blue-lavender bell-shaped flowers