



Native Plant Glossary

Native Plant

The official US Government definition is given by the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS). NRCS defines native plant as “A plant that is a part of the balance of nature that has developed over hundreds or thousands of years in a particular region or ecosystem. Note: The word native should always be used with a geographic qualifier (that is, native to New England [for example]). Only plants found in this country before European settlement are considered to be native to the United States.”

Non-Native Plant

A plant that was introduced with human help to a new place or new habitat, where it was not previously found.

Naturalized Plant

A non-native plant that does not need human help to maintain itself over time, in an area where it is not native. Naturalized plants are not native.

Cultivar

A plant that was selected, by plant breeders, for certain characteristics, that are maintained during propagation.

- A cultivar does not come true to seed and needs continued human-mediated propagation to continue;
- You can tell a cultivar by its scientific name which begins with its genus, followed by its species, and then its cultivar name in quotation marks. For example *Ribes sanguineum* ‘Oregon snowflake’ is a cultivar derived from the native *Ribes sanguineum*; and
- Nativar is slang for a cultivar of a native plant.

Hybrid

A plant produced by crossing the genetic materials from two different species. They are not cultivars, but, you can have cultivars of a hybrid.

- *Lavandula x intermedia* is a cross between *Lavandula angustifolia* (English lavender) and *Lavandula latifolia* (Portuguese lavender)
- *Lavandula x intermedia* ‘Grosso’ and *Lavandula x intermedia* ‘Provence’ are two cultivars of *Lavandula x intermedia*

Mutation

Plant mutations, also known as sports or chimeras, are genetic changes that may affect the appearance of the foliage, flowers, fruit or stems.

- Vegetative propagation is used to maintain desirable characteristics, plants are often prone to "reversion", meaning that part or all of the plant reverts to its original form.
- Examples: Camelia flowers with specks and stripes

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