SITE-TO-SOURCE / SAMPLE CONSULTATION

A coordinated native garden across three yard environments

Onondaga Hill, New York

$179 Home Landscape Plant Palette • **Three planting areas**

Illustrative report for a fictional client and site; no real property inspection or purchase. Sample edition: 7 Nov 2026 | PHY-SAMPLE-001-179_Onondaga_Hill_Home_Landscape

Your recommended direction

Use repeated plants and clear edges in the sunny front; trial the rear moisture transition first; develop woodland-layer planting gradually beneath existing trees.

The client behind the question

Fictional client: Dorothy Gale

“The wet patch is still my biggest headache, but I also have a sunny area in front that could be better for birds and bees, and a shaded edge under older trees. I don't want to tear up the whole lawn. I'd like a plan that tells me which areas to tackle first, gives me flowering plants for different seasons, and doesn't leave me with a lot of digging around tree roots. I can spread the purchases out rather than buy everything this year.”

Illustrative mock submission, not an actual customer testimonial. Its wording is reconstructed from the original scenario.

Selected answers from the client intake

Intake question	Client's answer
My goal	Improve wildlife habitat and seasonal appearance in three parts of the same residential property.
The spaces	Sunny front planting about 10-12 x 25 ft; rear spring-wet depression about 15 x 20 ft; shaded wooded edge with mature roots.
What concerns me	Variable moisture, tree-root competition, uncertainty over how much planting is realistic, and Toto near the yard.
My preferences	Native flowers, restrained plant groupings, pollinator support and a garden that still looks cared for.
What to avoid	Large lawn removal at once, unnecessary root disturbance and species unsuited to summer drying.
Budget and approach	Illustrative phased plant/material budget about $1,500-$3,000; start with a manageable first year.

How we answered the client's questions

Client asked	How this report responds
Where should I begin if I cannot do the whole yard?	Try the rear moisture-transition planting and a small repeated sunny-front grouping before working under trees.
How do the sunny plants create a coherent look?	Repeat hairy beardtongue, wild bergamot and little bluestem in compatible groups, with compact goldenrods and asters for later color.
What can live under the trees?	Pennsylvania sedge, blue wood aster and selected fern/phlox options address shade; planting and watering must respect existing roots.
Can I include shrubs as well as flowers?	The palette gives red-osier dogwood, northern spicebush and ninebark as conditional screening/structure choices, not default additions everywhere.

What we clarified in the simulated written intake

Follow-up question	Client reply and resulting decision
Which part matters most this year?	Client: The muddy patch first, and only a modest start out front. Report decision: The staged sequence protects the budget and keeps wooded-edge work for later.

The plant recommendations and next steps that follow show the result of these client-specific choices. Site observations remain fictional, and conditions must be confirmed before real installation.

How we interpreted this project

A sunny front area, a seasonally wet rear depression, and a wooded edge with competing tree roots. A fictional homeowner would prefer to improve habitat without replacing the entire lawn at once.

The $179 Home Landscape Plant Palette coordinates several related spaces on one residential property, with planting priorities and phases; a formal consultation call and revision are not included.

Three decisions that matter most

01 Keep sunny, wet, and shaded environments as separate plant-selection decisions.

02 Begin with a small rear-edge planting and a modest front-yard grouping.

03 Use the wooded edge as a later phase, avoiding aggressive excavation near mature tree roots.

Plant recommendations

24 screened plant choices are presented below. They are alternatives organized by planting environment and use—not a shopping list you must buy in full. Mature dimensions and growing conditions remain approximate; confirm the supplied plant form, actual site light and water before purchase.

Sunny front

Plant / selection status	How it may work and what to check
Hairy beardtongue *Penstemon hirsutus* Plant option	A restrained flowering accent for lean, rocky soil; avoid soggy ground. **Best fit:** Sun; dry, free-draining; 1–2.5 ft · early summer
Wild bergamot *Monarda fistulosa* Plant option	Strong pollinator appeal; allow air circulation and some spread. **Best fit:** Sun; dry-mesic; 2–4 ft · midsummer
Little bluestem *Schizachyrium scoparium* Plant option	Warm-season bunchgrass with copper fall/winter structure. **Best fit:** Sun; dry; 2–4 ft · summer–winter
Early goldenrod *Solidago juncea* Plant option	Brings yellow flowers earlier than many fall goldenrods. **Best fit:** Sun; dry-mesic; 2–4 ft · summer
Gray goldenrod *Solidago nemoralis* Plant option	Smaller goldenrod for sunnier, poorer soils; allow informal drifts. **Best fit:** Sun; dry, lean; 1–2.5 ft · late summer
Smooth aster *Symphyotrichum laeve var. laeve* Plant option	Late pollinator bloom; may need support in rich or shaded conditions. **Best fit:** Sun; dry-mesic; 2–4 ft · late season

Woodland edge

Plant / selection status	How it may work and what to check
Pennsylvania sedge *Carex pensylvanica* Plant option	Low grass-like texture under trees; establishment can be slow. **Best fit:** Part shade–shade; dry; 0.5–1 ft · foliage
Plantain-leaved sedge *Carex plantaginea* Plant option	Broad, pleated leaves suit the better-moistened shaded margin. **Best fit:** Shade; moist-mesic; 0.5–1.5 ft · foliage
Wild blue phlox *Phlox divaricata* Plant option	Spring flowers; keep sheltered from hard summer drought. **Best fit:** Part shade; mesic; 0.7–1.5 ft · spring

Plant / selection status	How it may work and what to check
Christmas fern *Polystichum acrostichoides* Plant option	Winter foliage; ASPCA lists as non-toxic to dogs; nursery-propagated only. **Best fit:** Shade; mesic–dry; 1–2 ft · evergreen Check: New York lists this species as exploitably vulnerable under 6 NYCRR 193.3. Use documented, lawfully propagated stock; do not collect it from the wild for this project.
Blue-stemmed goldenrod *Solidago caesia* Plant option	Delicate golden flowers along stems in a lightly shaded edge. **Best fit:** Part shade; dry-mesic; 1.5–3 ft · fall
Blue wood aster *Symphyotrichum cordifolium* Plant option	Late flowers in partial shade; leave room for self-seeding. **Best fit:** Part shade; dry-mesic; 2–4 ft · fall
Creeping foamflower *Tiarella stolonifera* Plant option	Low native groundcover; verify true stoloniferous species at purchase. **Best fit:** Shade; mesic; 0.5–1 ft · spring Check: Current Kew treatment recognizes Tiarella stolonifera; nurseries may use Tiarella cordifolia broadly. Check the supplied plant identification before substituting.

Seasonal wet area

Plant / selection status	How it may work and what to check
White turtlehead *Chelone glabra* Plant option	Reserve for soil that remains moist well into summer; nursery-propagated only. **Best fit:** Part sun; moist-wet; 2–4 ft · late summer Check: New York lists this species as exploitably vulnerable under 6 NYCRR 193.3. Use documented, lawfully propagated stock; do not collect it from the wild for this project.
Golden alexanders *Zizia aurea* Plant option	Bridges spring bloom and moist-to-average conditions. **Best fit:** Sun–part shade; mesic; 1.5–3 ft · late spring
Allegheny monkeyflower *Mimulus ringens* Plant option	Conditional: establish only after repeated wetness is confirmed. **Best fit:** Sun–part shade; wet; 1–3 ft · summer
Sallow sedge *Carex lurida* Plant option	Wet-ground sedge; not a substitute for a dry lawn edge. **Best fit:** Sun–part shade; wet; 1.5–3 ft · foliage
Bladder sedge *Carex intumescens* Plant option	Useful where moisture persists beside tree cover; seedheads add texture. **Best fit:** Part shade; moist-wet; 1–2 ft · foliage

Plant / selection status	How it may work and what to check
New england aster *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae* Plant option	Tall late-flowering accent, best toward the back of an open planting. **Best fit:** Sun; mesic-moist; 3–5 ft · fall
Blue vervain *Verbena hastata* Plant option	Upright flowers; site on the reliably moist side, not a drought-prone bank. **Best fit:** Sun–part sun; moist; 2–5 ft · summer
Scarlet bee-balm *Monarda didyma* Plant option	For the moist margin, not standing water; airflow helps limit mildew. **Best fit:** Part sun; mesic-moist; 2–4 ft · summer **Check:** For the moist margin, not standing water; airflow helps limit mildew. NY protected-plant sourcing: do not wild-collect; obtain lawful nursery-propagated material. New York lists this species as exploitably vulnerable under 6 NYCRR 193.3. Use documented, lawfully propagated stock; do not collect it from the wild for this project.

Shrubs and screening

Plant / selection status	How it may work and what to check
Red-osier dogwood *Cornus sericea* Plant option	Strong winter stems and bird cover; allow room for suckering. **Best fit:** Sun–part sun; moist; 6–9 ft · shrub
Northern spicebush *Lindera benzoin* Plant option	Woodland-edge screening; not for the driest root-filled area. **Best fit:** Part shade; moist; 6–12 ft · shrub
Ninebark *Physocarpus opulifolius* Plant option	Flexible screening option; choose straight species and size carefully. **Best fit:** Sun–part sun; dry-mesic; 5–10 ft · shrub

How to put the recommendations to work

01 Observe spring-to-summer moisture and record sun in all three areas.

02 Build one manageable starter bed with repeated species rather than many single plants.

03 Add understory and shrub structure after the first plants establish.

Important site and safety considerations

- NRCS mapping gives regional soil context, not bed-scale moisture measurements.
- For New York protected native species, use properly propagated nursery stock and never remove wild plants.

Plant sourcing and expectations

Ask growers for the exact scientific name (including any trade synonym), the plant or seed format, the propagation source and whether stock is suitable for the local climate. A nursery listing is a lead for shopping, not proof of current inventory, correct provenance, or guaranteed establishment.

Examples of places to inquire

Local native-plant organizations and regional nursery directories. Use for lawful, nursery-propagated stock; verify species and origin before purchase.

Sources consulted

The references below support the regional botanical, gardening, or regulatory decisions in this illustration. Published range, nursery listings and generalized soils information do not prove parcel-scale conditions, county indigeneity or seed-lot origin. Check dated rules and availability before making real purchases.

websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov - app

soilseries.sc.egov.usda.gov - OSD_Docs

cceonondaga.org - gardening

cceonondaga.org - gardening

millstgardens.com - native-plants-in-production

flnps.org - node

hgcny.wildones.org - shopping

aspca.org - pet-care

aspca.org - pet-care

law.cornell.edu - regulations

New York protected native plants - 6 NYCRR 193.3