SITE-TO-SOURCE / SAMPLE CONSULTATION

What will grow beside a seasonal wet patch?

Onondaga Hill, New York

$39 Focused Plant Consultation • One site question

Illustrative report for a fictional client and site; no real property inspection or purchase. Sample edition: 7 Nov 2026 | PHY-SAMPLE-001-39_Onondaga_Hill_Focused

Your recommended direction

Try golden alexanders on the wet-to-average edge first. Use New England aster only where there is enough sun and height clearance. Reserve wet-ground plants until late-spring and summer moisture is observed.

The client behind the question

Fictional client: Dorothy Gale

"Our backyard has one low spot that turns to mud in spring, then seems to dry out later. I'd love a few native flowers there, but I don't want a project that takes over our weekends. Toto is curious about everything growing near the lawn. Can you tell me which plants are worth trying first, and which ones I should hold off on until I understand how wet the ground really is?"

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 main question	What can I plant beside one spring-wet patch without a big maintenance commitment or unnecessary risks for Toto?
The location	One small backyard depression at an illustrative Onondaga Hill home; no measured soil or drainage data.
What I have observed	Spring puddling and later apparent drying; light changes as the day progresses.
My priorities	Attractive native plants, limited purchases and very simple upkeep.

How we answered the client's questions

Client asked	How this report responds
What is the most sensible first plant?	Try golden alexanders (Zizia aurea) at the wet-to-average transition rather than the wettest spot.
Should I plant the wettest pocket right away?	Not yet. Bladder sedge and white turtlehead are held for locations that remain suitably moist into summer.

Client asked	How this report responds
What about Toto?	No recommendation is a veterinary safety clearance. Limit access to new plantings and seek veterinary advice following suspected ingestion.

Written clarification: Do you know whether water persists into summer? The fictional client replied: Not reliably; I mostly notice the spring mud. As a result: The wettest-ground choices stay conditional, and the report gives an observation-first next step.

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 small backyard depression is muddy in spring, then may dry in summer. A dog uses the yard. The exact duration of soil moisture has not been measured.

A $39 Focused Plant Consultation answers one small-area planting question with a short list and cautions. No paid call, full-yard design or formal revision is included.

Three decisions that matter most

01 Observe the depression after ordinary rainfall and once during a dry spell.

02 Choose one or two options matched to actual light and moisture; do not buy all four.

03 Keep an inquisitive dog out of new plantings and ask a veterinarian about any ingestion concern.

Plant recommendations

4 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.

One wet-to-dry bed

Plant / selection status	How it may work and what to check
Golden alexanders *Zizia aurea* Best first trial	Bridges spring bloom and moist-to-average conditions. **Best fit:** Sun–part shade; mesic; 1.5–3 ft · late spring
New england aster *Symphyotrichum novae-angliae* Sunny outer edge	Tall late-flowering accent, best toward the back of an open planting. **Best fit:** Sun; mesic-moist; 3–5 ft · fall
Bladder sedge *Carex intumescens* Only if damp through summer	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
White turtlehead *Chelone glabra* Only if reliably moist	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.

How to put the recommendations to work

01 Photograph the wet spot and note when standing water disappears.

02 Plant a very small test group on the edge, not the deepest pocket.

03 Assess establishment before trying moisture-dependent species.

Important site and safety considerations

- No plant is certified dog-safe; avoid unsupervised chewing.
- White turtlehead is protected under New York plant rules: buy lawful propagated stock, never wild-collected 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.

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.

USDA: Palatine soil series

ASPCA: Plants and pets

New York: Protected plants

Penn State: Aster rain-garden guide

Finger Lakes Native Plant Society

ASPCA: Toxic plant database

NC State: Golden alexanders

FLNPS: White turtlehead