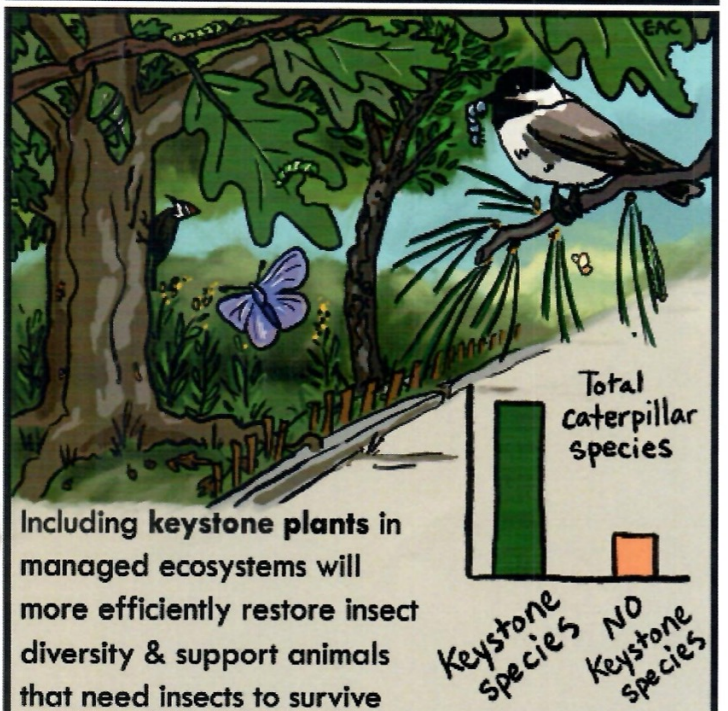
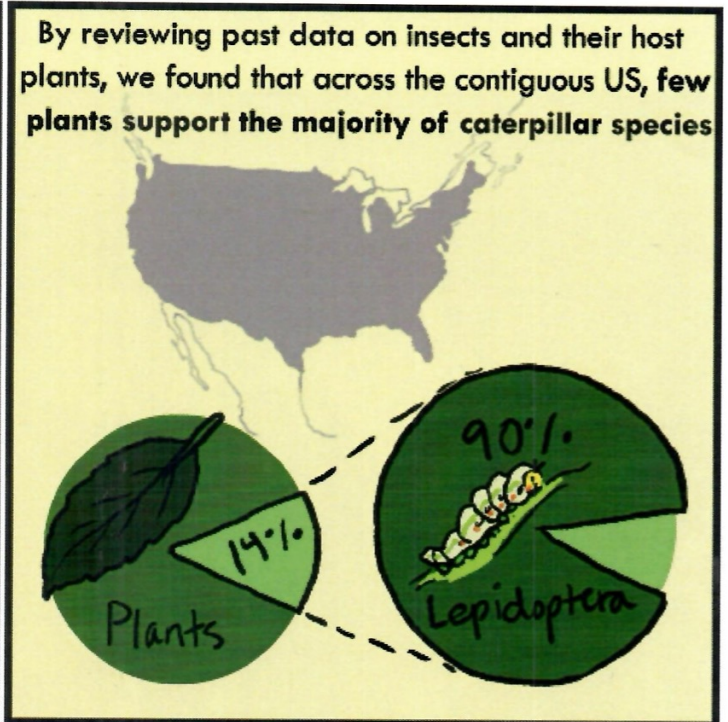
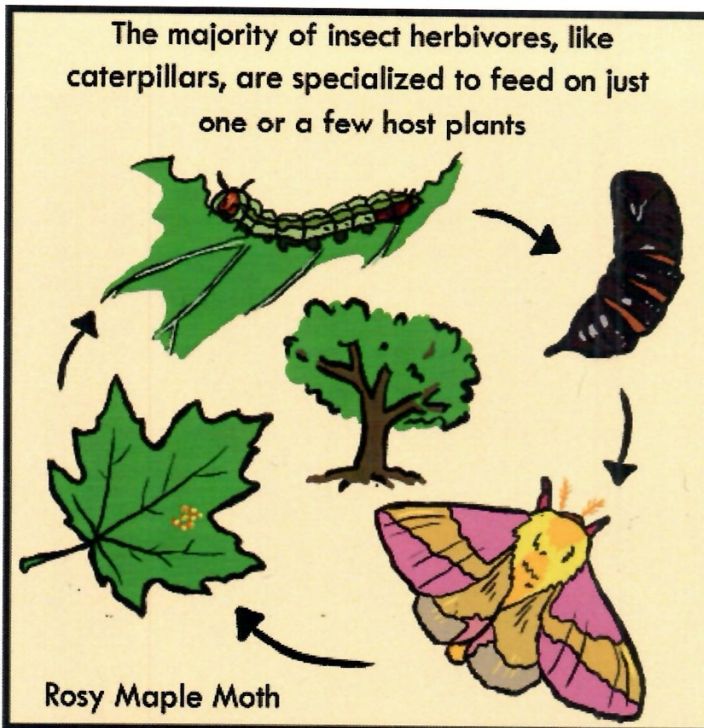


# WHAT ARE KEYSTONE PLANTS?

**Keystone plants** are native plants that support a significant number of caterpillars (butterfly and moth larvae). Planting keystone plants helps build complex food webs by forming the essential foundation — native plants and insects — that provide food for other organisms, directly and indirectly.



Narango, D.L., Tallamy, D.W. and Shropshire, K. J. 2020. Few keystone plant genera support the majority of Lepidoptera diversity. Nature Communications  
Access the paper here: <https://rdcu.be/caKj5>

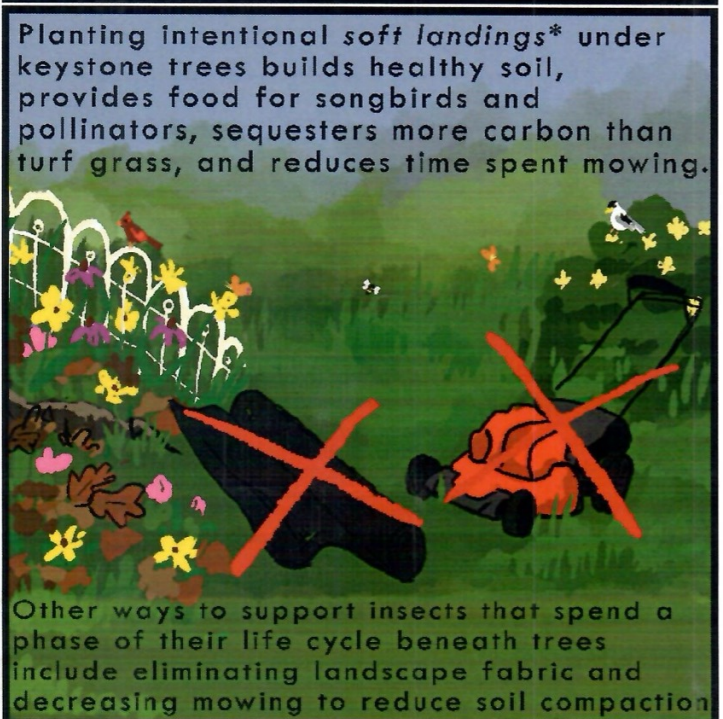
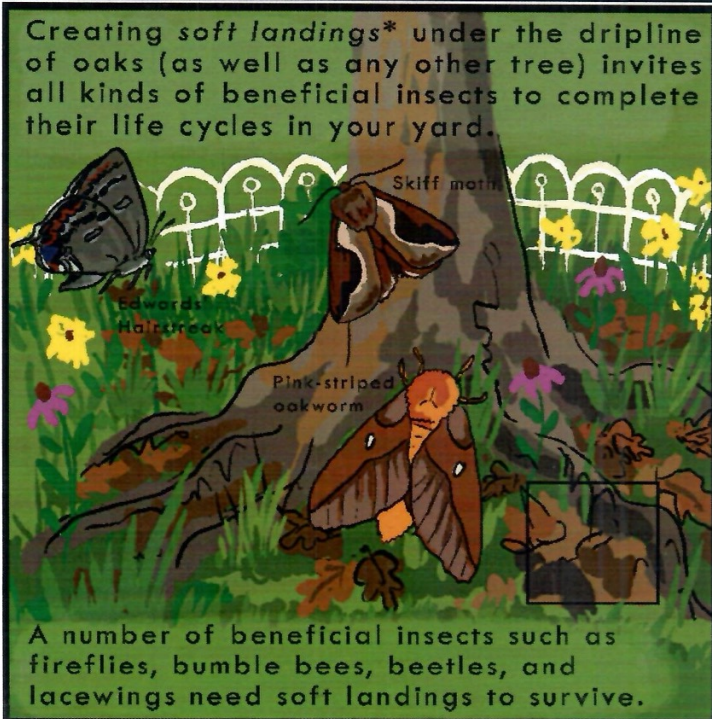
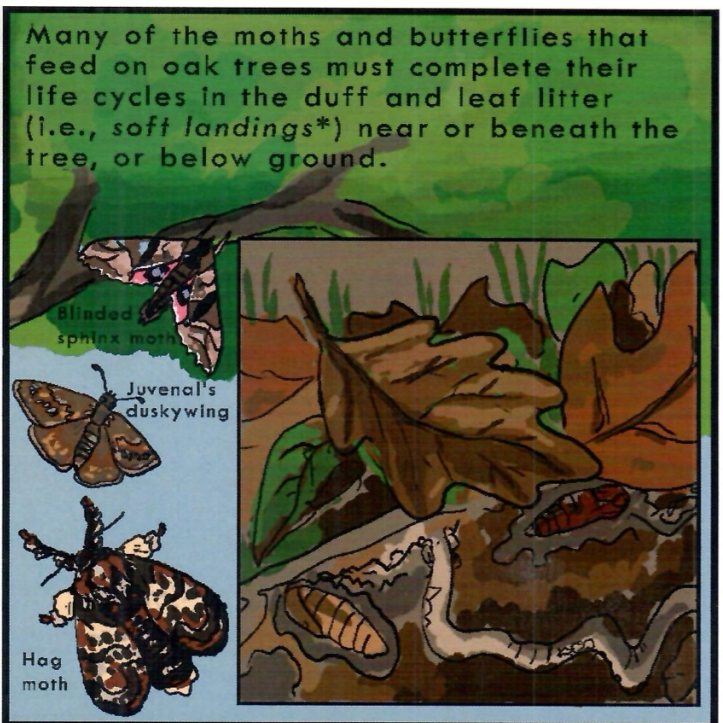
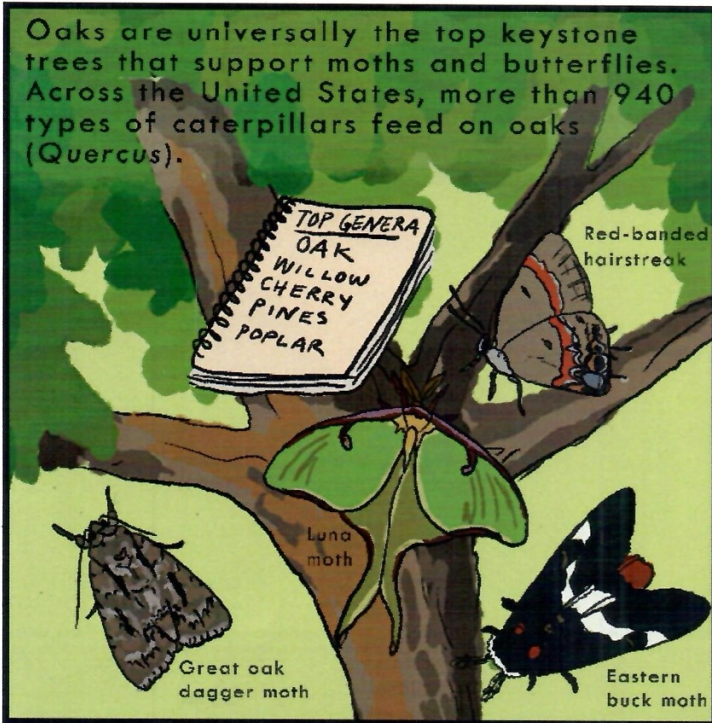


@DLNarango  
Share your gardens!  
#plantsforwildlife

Art: Elsa Cousins

# SOFT LANDINGS

**Soft landings** are diverse native plantings under keystone trees (or any other regionally appropriate native tree). These plantings provide critical shelter and habitat for one or more life cycle stages of moths, butterflies, and beneficial insects such as bumble bees, fireflies, lacewings, and beetles. In addition to plants, *soft landings* also include leaf litter, duff, and plant debris.



## SHRUBS & TREES

PHOTO	NAME Common & Scientific	HEIGHT	FLOWERS Bloom Time & Color	LIGHT	SOIL Moisture & Type	WILDLIFE	NOTES
	<b>American Holly</b> <i>Ilex opaca</i>	15' - 40'	MAR APR <b>MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT small, white	 	  C L		evergreen; pyramid shape; red berries in Oct.
	<b>Arrowwood</b> <i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	5' - 10'	MAR APR <b>MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT flat white clusters	  	 -  -  L S O	 	blue-black berries in Sept.; red fall foliage
	<b>Beach Plum</b> <i>Prunus maritima</i>	4' - 15'	MAR APR <b>MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT white clusters		 -  L S		edible purplish-black fruit in Aug.; good for jelly; tolerates
	<b>Buttonbush</b> <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	6' - 10'	MAR APR MAY JUN <b>JUL AUG</b> SEP OCT creamy white	 	   C L S O	 	ball-shaped clusters of fragrant flowers; tolerates wet areas
	<b>Eastern Red Cedar</b> <i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	25' - 50'	MAR <b>APR</b> MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT green or yellow	 	 -  C L S		evergreen; blue fruit loved by birds; drought-tolerant
	<b>Eastern Redbud</b> <i>Cercis canadensis</i>	20' - 35'	MAR <b>APR</b> MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT magenta	  	 -  L S	 	one of the earliest bloomers; drought-resistant
	<b>Highbush Blueberry</b> <i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>	4' - 10'	MAR <b>APR MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT white-pinkish	  	 -  -  L S O	 	blueberries July-Aug.; red fall color; add organic matter to soil
	<b>Inkberry Holly</b> <i>Ilex glabra</i>	4' - 10'	MAR APR <b>MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT small, greenish-white	 	 -  C L S O		evergreen; black berries in Sept. on female plants
	<b>Mountain Laurel</b> <i>Kalmia latifolia</i>	8' - 12'	MAR APR <b>MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT white to pink	  	 -  -  C L S O		evergreen; nice addition to woodland garden
	<b>Ninebark</b> <i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>	4' - 8'	MAR APR <b>MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT white to pink	 	 -  -  C L	 	domed flower clusters; likes sandy soil
	<b>Northern Bayberry</b> <i>Morella pensylvanica</i>	2' - 8'	MAR <b>APR</b> MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT small, yellow-green	 	 -  -  C L S		waxy bluish-white berries in Sept.; plants will sucker and form colonies
	<b>Red Chokeberry</b> <i>Photinia pyrifolia</i>	6' - 10'	MAR <b>APR MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT clusters of white	 	 -  -  C L S		red fruit in Sept. persists through winter; great red fall color
	<b>Red Twig Dogwood</b> <i>Cornus sericea</i>	8' - 12'	MAR APR <b>MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT white		  L		bright red stems for winter interest
	<b>River Birch</b> <i>Betula nigra</i>	40' - 60'	MAR <b>APR MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT brown	 	  C L		attractive exfoliating bark; can grow on flood-prone land
	<b>Shadbush or Serviceberry</b> <i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>	35' - 50'	MAR <b>APR MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT small, white	 	 -  C L S	 	one of the earliest bloomers; red to purple fruit in July
	<b>Sweet Pepperbush</b> <i>Clethra alnifolia</i>	5' - 8'	MAR APR MAY JUN <b>JUL AUG</b> SEP OCT white	  	 -  C L S	 	brown seed heads Sept.-Feb.; deer-resistant
	<b>Sweetbay Magnolia</b> <i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	12' - 30'	MAR APR <b>MAY JUN JUL</b> AUG SEP OCT creamy white	  	  C L S	 	fragrant flowers; tolerates flooding and salt
	<b>Sweetspire</b> <i>Itea virginica</i>	4' - 8'	MAR APR <b>MAY JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT white	  	  C L S	 	fragrant flowers; good fall color
	<b>Winged Sumac</b> <i>Rhus copallinum</i>	8' - 15'	MAR APR MAY JUN <b>JUL AUG SEP</b> OCT yellowish green	 	 -  C L S	 	dark red fruit persists over winter; great fall color
	<b>Winterberry Holly</b> <i>Ilex verticillata</i>	4' - 10'	MAR APR MAY <b>JUN</b> JUL AUG SEP OCT small, white	  	   C L S O		red berries Oct.-Dec. on female plants

Instead of Norway Maple (*Acer platanoides*)

Pick a native!

**Black Gum**  
*Nyssa sylvatica*

**Red Maple**  
*Acer rubrum*



**B**

Birds and butterflies prefer these native trees, which exhibit outstanding fall color.

Instead of Burning Bush (*Euonymus alatus*)

Pick a native!

**Virginia Sweetspire**  
*Itea virginiana*

**Nannyberry**  
*Viburnum lentago*



**B**

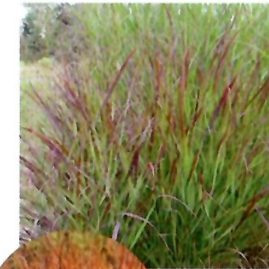
Unlike burning bush, both sweetspire and nannyberry produce beautiful spring flowers in addition to stunning fall color.

Instead of Silver Grass (*Miscanthus sinensis*)

Pick a native!

**Switchgrass**  
*Panicum virgatum*

**Little Bluestem**  
*Schizachyrium scoparium*



**A**

Summer and winter colors of switchgrass and little bluestem provide multi-season interest. Both grasses support the larvae of butterflies and moths.

Instead of Japanese Spirea (*Spirea japonica*)

Pick a native!

**Ninebark**  
*Physocarpus opulifolius*

**N. Bush Honeysuckle**  
*Diervilla lonicera*



**C**

Ninebark blooms in spring and honeysuckle blooms in summer. They both offer nice fall color as well.

Instead of Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)

Pick a native!

**New Jersey Tea**  
*Ceanothus americanus*

**Red Osier dogwood**  
*Cornus sericea*



**B**

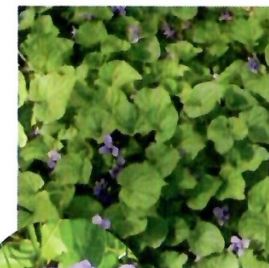
These shrubs provide red fall color, flowers in the spring and Red osier offers red berries for winter interest.

Instead of Periwinkle (*Vinca minor*)

Pick a native!

**Common Violet**  
*Viola sororia*

**Foamflower**  
*Tiarella cordifolia*



**B**

Both wild violets and foamflower have lovely spring flowers and interesting leaves, but are more easily contained