

|            | Blue Wood Sedge<br><i>Carex flaccosperma</i><br><small>available!</small>                     | Leadwort<br><i>Ceratostigma plumbaginoides</i><br><small>available!</small>                               | Liriope<br><i>Liriope spicata</i><br><small>available!</small>                                       | Lady's Mantle<br><i>Alchemilla mollis</i><br><small>available!</small>                                            | Coral Bells<br><i>Heuchera americana</i><br>'Chocolate Veil'<br><small>available!</small>  | Getting plants established                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HABIT      | Clump forming<br>6-12 inches high                                                             | Mat forming<br>8-12 inches high                                                                           | Clump forming<br>8-12 inches high                                                                    | Clump forming<br>12-18 inches high                                                                                | Clump forming<br>18-24 inches high                                                         | Once established, these plants are tough and weed suppressive, but need some care when you put them in the ground.                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| ZONE       | Zones 5-8                                                                                     | Zones 5-9                                                                                                 | Zones 4-10                                                                                           | Zones 4-7                                                                                                         | Zones 4-9                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| ORIGIN     | North America                                                                                 | Asia                                                                                                      | Asia                                                                                                 | Asia                                                                                                              | North America                                                                              | <i>To ensure good establishment</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| AESTHETICS | Blue-green wide bladed grass-like foliage. Interesting slender seed heads form in the spring. | Lime-green foliage with tinges of red. Clear blue star-shaped flowers with red seedheads, summer to fall. | Dark green grass-like evergreen foliage, summer flower spikes in shades from light purple to violet. | Large round light green-gray leaves sparkle when holding moisture droplets. Sprays of small yellow-green flowers. | Deep maroon foliage, small delicate pink flowers on tall flower spikes.                    | <b>START CLEAN</b> Plant only on a site that is free of weeds. If there are perennial weeds with fleshy roots, take time to completely kill or remove them before going any further. These plants can suppress weeds that germinate from seeds, but may not be able to compete with weeds sprouting from root pieces. |
| CULTURE    | Partial shade to shade. Benefits from cutting back in late winter.                            | Full sun to partial shade. Grows best in dry soils. Vigorous grower, may spread in garden bed.            | Full sun to partial shade. Can benefit from spring shearing if foliage becomes winter damaged.       | Full sun to partial shade. Likes moist soil.                                                                      | Full sun to partial shade. Evergreen in mild winters. Prune out damaged foliage in spring. | <b>ADD COMPOST</b> To loosen a heavy soil or help a sandy soil hold onto water and nutrients, till in organic matter—compost is best.                                                                                                                                                                                 |



# Weed-suppressive Groundcovers

For further information and resources visit:  
[http://nysipm.cornell.edu/nursery\\_ghouse/weed\\_supp\\_grcovers.asp](http://nysipm.cornell.edu/nursery_ghouse/weed_supp_grcovers.asp)

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*What's in a name?* A *groundcover* is a perennial plant used *en masse* for its visual wallop and to crowd out weeds. Many are gorgeous perennials that gardeners have used in flower borders for years. Now we're finding that some are top performers in the "tough sites" department too. Fewer weeds means less herbicide use. Good news for you ... and for the environment.

The plants listed here have been evaluated under different growing conditions for their ease of establishment, low maintenance characteristics and their ability to exclude weeds. Our initial screening tests took place in Ithaca (Finger Lakes region, zone 5) and Riverhead (eastern Long Island, zone 7), New York. Since then demonstration plots have been established across New York State. This brochure summarizes the growth characteristics for top rated groundcovers. All of these plants will perform well in full sun, and some are shade tolerant as well. If you are interested in native plants look for those that originate in North America. Nursery retailers can mark the plants in this guide that are available and suited to local conditions.



|            | <div> <div>Moss Phlox</div> <div><i>Phlox subulata</i></div> <div>‘Emerald Blue’</div> <div>available?</div> </div>                                                                                                                                | <div> <div>Butterfly Milkweed</div> <div><i>Asclepias tuberosa</i></div> <div></div> <div>available?</div> </div>                                                                                                                                        | <div> <div>Catmint</div> <div><i>Nepeta x faassenii</i></div> <div>‘Walker’s Low’</div> <div>available?</div> </div>                                                                                                                                        | <div> <div>Autumn Goldenrod</div> <div><i>Solidago sphacelata</i></div> <div>‘Golden Fleece’</div> <div>available?</div> </div>                                                                                                                                | <div> <div>Salvia</div> <div><i>Salvia nemorosa</i> / <i>S. sylvestris</i></div> <div>‘Blue Hill’</div> <div>available?</div> </div>                                                                                                                           | <div> <div>Little Bluestem</div> <div><i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i></div> <div>‘The Blues’</div> <div>available?</div> </div>                                                                                                                                 | <div> <div>Northern Dropseed</div> <div><i>Sporobolus heterolepis</i></div> <div></div> <div>available?</div> </div>                                                                                                                                           | <div> <div>White Heath Aster</div> <div><i>Aster ericoides</i></div> <div>‘Snow Flurry’</div> <div>available?</div> </div>                                                                                                                                     | <div> <div>Two-row Stonecrop</div> <div><i>Sedum spurium</i></div> <div>‘John Creech’</div> <div>available?</div> </div>                                                                                                                                       |
|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HABIT      | Mat forming<br>4-6 inches high                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Sprawling<br>12-24 inches high                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Upright and sprawling<br>18-24 inches high                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | HABIT<br>Upright<br>18 inches high                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Clump forming<br>18-24 inches high                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Clump forming<br>20-40 inches high                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | HABIT<br>Clump forming<br>24-48 inches high                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Low, dense mound<br>3-6 inches high                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Creeping<br>3-6 inches high                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| ZONE       | Zones 3-9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Zones 3-9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Zones 3-8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | ZONE<br>Zones 2-8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Zones 4-8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Zones 5-9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | ZONE<br>Zones 3-9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Zones 3-9                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Zones 3-8                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| ORIGIN     | North America                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | North America                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Eurasia, Africa                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | ORIGIN<br>North America                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Europe                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | North America                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | ORIGIN<br>North America                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | North America                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Asia                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| AESTHETICS | Profusion of early spring blue blooms, glossy evergreen foliage.                                                                                                                                                                                   | Dark green foliage. Bright orange flowers in summer are very attractive to butterflies. Interesting upright seed pods late in the season.                                                                                                                | Green-grey foliage. Long lasting blue flowers in spring/ summer.                                                                                                                                                                                            | AESTHETICS<br>Broad dark green foliage with late summer display of yellow blooms.                                                                                                                                                                              | Blue flowers late spring through early fall attractive to pollinators and hummingbirds.                                                                                                                                                                        | Tall, slender blue-green leaves turn to golden bronze in fall. Looks best planted in large groups. Free to bend and sway, provides a prairie look.                                                                                                             | AESTHETICS<br>Graceful fine textured grass. In late summer tall lightly fragrant flowers/ seed heads are produced. Foliage fades golden to bronze in fall/ winter.                                                                                             | Mounding dark green foliage covered with white flowers in September.                                                                                                                                                                                           | Low growing with small, fleshy, evergreen leaves and pink flowers in late summer and early fall.                                                                                                                                                               |
| CULTURE    | Full sun.<br>Tolerates drought and even a little salt. Grows best in well drained soil.                                                                                                                                                            | Full sun.<br>Drought tolerant. Prune back spent stems in late winter or spring. New foliage emerges later than most perennials.                                                                                                                          | Full sun.<br>Vigorous grower, allow room so it doesn’t crowd out neighboring plants.                                                                                                                                                                        | CULTURE<br>Full sun.<br>Removing spent flower stalks in the spring gives the plant a more refined look.                                                                                                                                                        | Full sun.<br>Cut back after first bloom to encourage vigorous re-bloom.                                                                                                                                                                                        | Full sun.<br>Remove last year's foliage by cutting to ground in late winter/ early spring.                                                                                                                                                                     | CULTURE<br>Full sun.<br>Drought tolerant. Grows best in well drained soils.                                                                                                                                                                                    | Full sun to partial shade.<br>Drought tolerant.                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Full sun to partial shade.<br>Grows best in dry soils.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|            |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |