

March 2013

NATIVE NEWS



Last chance to register for next week's seminar on Maintenance of Native Plant Communities to be held in Bloomington on March 6! The conference has been approved for CCH credits in several categories. Please see the attached registration flyer.

SPENCE SEED MIXES – FORMULATED FOR SUCCESS

Our seed mixes have been designed to provide successful establishment of native plant communities under a variety of conditions. They differ from other native seed mixes through our inclusion of ample native cover crop species to ward off weed invasion, our use of species that are adapted to a wide range of soil types and conditions, and our use of locally produced seed of Indiana genetic origin.

All Spence Restoration Nursery upland seed mixes include two to four lbs of native wild ryes. Virginia Wild Rye (*Elymus virginicus*) and Canada Wild Rye (*Elymus canadensis*) are particularly good at establishing a thick cool season cover by year two of an installation. This is very important as slower developing natives are still weak competitors with weeds until year three. In the absence of the cover provided by these wild ryes, aggressive perennial weeds such as Canada thistle and Canada goldenrod may become established in the first two years, hindering the development of the slower developing natives. The wild ryes start to diminish in dominance by year four, allowing the slower developing natives to fill in and mature.

Our seed mixes are designed to thrive in heavy soil types that dominate the glacial till plains of the central and northern Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois. Many nurseries include species such as Wild Lupine that only grow in sandy soils in their prairie mixes, wasting your money on seed that will not thrive in fine-textured soils. While we include a few species that prefer sand in our [Low Stature Prairie Mix](#), our other mixes, including our [Wet-Tolerant Low Stature Prairie Mix](#) contain species that thrive in fine-textured soil. We have utilized over a decade of observations of what thrives here on the central till plain of Indiana to ensure that our mixes are composed of species adapted to our local conditions. Further, our seed mixes have a balance of species based on appropriate density and seed counts per oz. We do not load our seed mixes with annuals or inexpensive seeds. We are also happy to custom design seed mixes for your restoration project based on site conditions and botanical records for your area.

With over 200 acres of seed production farms, we are the largest producer of Indiana genotype seeds. Diligent record-keeping of the locations of our foundation seed collections has allowed us to assemble over 100 species of [Yellow-Tag Source-Identified](#) seeds available for sale as individual species, or in our mixes. These local genotypes ensure that our seed will adapt well to the soils, growing season, and climate of the Ohio Valley and southern Great Lakes.

Please support our efforts to supply source-identified local genotype seeds by specifying Spence Restoration Nursery seed mixes in your projects.

Plant Feature: *Oenothera pilosella* (Prairie Sundrops)

A low stature species of sedge meadows and wet to mesic prairies, Prairie Sundrops is an attractive plant that produces showy 2 inch yellow blossoms in early summer. It is showy enough to warrant its use in sunny perennial beds as well as prairie restorations. Reaching only about a foot in height, it is also a fine addition to a rain garden. In a restoration, appropriate associates may be found in our [Sedge Meadow Mix](#) and our [Wet-tolerant Low Stature Prairie Mix](#).

