TORONTO Fact Sheet

What qualifies as a Naturalized Garden?

A naturalized garden is one that is both environmentally responsible and economical.
It is pesticide and chemical free, drought-tolerant and water efficient. It may contain native and / or non-native plant material, is low cost and low maintenance.

Unlike neglected properties comprised mainly of overgrown plants and / or invasive weeds, naturalized gardens are intentionally planted and managed within a boundary. The plant composition of a naturalized garden is chosen based on environmental benefits, aesthetics and/or ability to create an attractive habitat for birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

In order to have a naturalized garden within the City of Toronto, it must be in compliance with the City's Grass and Weeds by-law, Municipal Code **Chapter 489** which includes the following::

489 - 2. Maximum height.

A. The owner or occupant of private land shall cut the grass and weeds on their land and remove the cuttings whenever the growth of grass and weeds exceeds 20 centimetres in height.

B. For the purposes of this section, the term "grass and weeds" refers to:
(1) All noxious weeds and local weeds designated under the *Weed Control Act*; and
(2) Any other vegetation growth which does not form part of a natural garden that has been deliberately implemented to produce ground cover, including one or more species of wildflowers, shrubs, perennials, grasses, or combinations of them, whether native or non-native, consistent with a managed and natural landscape, other than regularly mown grass.

Requests to remove specific noxious weeds may be issued under the following criteria:

- if the plant threatens a person's health (i.e. ragweed, poison ivy, poison sumac, etc.)
- if the plant threatens our native plant communities in ravines and parks (i.e. invasive weeds such as Dog Strangling Vine, Purple Loosestrife, Garlic Mustard, European Buckthorn, etc.)
- if the plant poses a potential safety hazard (i.e. tree and / or shrub limbs which require pruning or removal, blocking sightline of traffic along boulevards or street corners, irritant (i.e. stinging nettle) or thorny plants when found along shared fence lines or sidewalks, etc.)

For more information visit:

http://www.toronto.ca/health/pesticides/go_natural_factsheets.htm
http://www.toronto.ca/health/pesticides/bylaw_faq_2007.htm
http://www.toronto.ca/watereff/tips/xeriscaping.htm#xeric

Common Invasive Plants and some Recommended Alternative Plants for Your Garden

Common Invasive Plants	Recommended Alternative Plants
Ragweed	Goldenrod
Dog Strangling Vine	Rudbeckia
Garlic Mustard	Foamflower
Poison Ivy	Purple Coneflower
European Buckthorn	Serviceberry
Purple Loosestrife	Cardinalflower