CARO

The Climate Action Regional Offices are an initiative of Local Government, funded by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment, as a shared service for Local Authorities

NOVEMBER 2026

Planting for Water and Nature

Support for local authority staff and community groups in management and maintenance of nature-based SuDS

Image: Euonymus europaeus (Spindle)

Oifig Réigiúnach um Ghníomhú ar son na hAeráide
Rialtas Áitiúil
Cósta Atlantach Theas

Climate Action Regional Offices
Local Government
Atlantic Seaboard South

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

PREPARED BY

Climate Action Regional Office (CARO), Atlantic Seaboard South which is hosted and staffed by Cork County Council.

CARO, Atlantic Seaboard South is one of four regional offices established as a national shared service by the Local Authority Sector in response to Action 8 of the 2018 National Adaptation Framework (NAF) and it is guided, supported and funded by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment (DCEE). The CAROs are mandated to coordinate and support local government to lead transformative change and deliver measurable climate action.

NOTE

This document is intended as a practical resource for local authority staff and other groups that have a role in the management and maintenance of vegetation in nature-based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

The document should be used in parallel with SuDS design and site-specific landscape, ecological and drainage advice with final plant selection being verified against characteristics of the location including site drainage, soil type, lines of sight requirements, underground services and availability of resources for maintenance.

CARO (CARO@CorkCoCo.ie) welcomes any comments/corrections to the document and undertakes to update the document regularly in line with developments in the area. The most up-to-date version of the document and more details are available on www.CARO.ie.

INTRODUCTION

Nature-based Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) can mitigate the impact of rainfall events which, due to climate change, are increasing in intensity and frequency. Effective design can result in these schemes not only delivering on their core function of rainwater collection and treatment but also in the support of wildlife and amenity value. This palette has been developed to allow selection of the most appropriate plants for SuDS.

SuDS include raingardens, bioretention areas, swales and wetlands. This palette profiles plants according to the type and location of SuDS feature that they are suited to, their performance in terms of the four pillars of SuDS (Water Quality, Water Quantity, Biodiversity and Visual Impact) and other information such as season of interest, size, maintenance requirements, etc.

USING THE PALETTE RESPONSIBLY

Use this palette in parallel with SuDS design and site-specific landscape, ecological and drainage advice.

Final plant selection should be verified against location characteristics such as site drainage, soil type, lines of sight requirements, underground services and availability of resources for maintenance.

HOW TO USE THE PALETTE

Identify the SuDS type and the zone within that SuDS to be planted. Refer to the palette to identify the plants suitable for the particular SuDS type and planting zone.

Check mature size of the plant, allow space for growth, visibility, lines of sight requirements and maintenance.

Combine seasonal interest and benefits for variety throughout the year.

Review care and cautions keeping in mind the resources available for maintenance and other factors such as impact of roots on underground services.

Establishment period (Years 1–2), plants should be watered during dry spells; weeded and mulched; failures replaced; inspected after heavy rain and blocked inlets/outlets cleared.

PLANT PROFILES

Each plant is described in terms of their performance under the four pillars of SuDS (Water Quality, Water Quantity, Visual Impact, and Biodiversity) and other characteristics such as season of interest, size, maintenance requirements, etc.

High, Medium and Low indicate relative performance under the pillars. Ratings can be used to inform better plant selection.

Water quality
Potential to improve the quality of rainwater runoff before it enters watercourses.

Water quantity
Potential to reduce flood risk by reducing the volume and rate of rainwater runoff.

Visual impact
Potential to improve landscape value by creating attractive spaces.

Biodiversity
Potential to create and connect habitats for wildlife.

UNDERSTANDING THE WATER RATINGS

Plants that are rated as having high, medium or low performance in relation to water quality and water quantity typically display specific physical or biological characteristics that determines their performance. The plant characteristics associated with each rating are detailed below.

WATER QUALITY IMPACT

(plants' ability to improve quality of rainwater runoff)

RATING	PLANT CHARACTERISTICS
HIGH	• Dense root system • Stabilise soil • Capture sediment • Slows runoff • Improves runoff water quality • Absorb nutrients • Filter pollutants
MEDIUM	• Dense root system • Stabilise soil • Capture sediment • Slows runoff • Improve runoff quality
LOW	• Woody, deep or fine root system • Stabilise soil • Moderate sediment capture. • Slows runoff

WATER QUANTITY IMPACT

(plants' ability to prevent flooding)

RATING	PLANT CHARACTERISTICS
HIGH	• Thrives in temporarily flooded areas • High evapotranspiration rates • Contributes to infiltration and stormwater attenuation.
MEDIUM	• Tolerates periodic waterlogged conditions • Contributes to evapotranspiration • Contributes to stormwater attenuation and infiltration.
LOW	• Prefers well-drained conditions • Contributes to evapotranspiration and infiltration.

BIODIVERSITY BENEFITS

Plant selection should be carefully considered to maximise biodiversity benefits with native and pollinator-friendly species used wherever possible. The palette uses the following icons to describe the biodiversity benefits of plants.

Pollinators
Plant produces flowers that provide nectar and pollen for pollinating insects such as bees, butterflies, moths and hoverflies.

Bird food
Plant produces seeds or fruits or other food resources for birds.

Wildlife shelter
Plant structure provides cover or habitat for insects, amphibians, birds or other wildlife.

AIPP SPECIES **AIPP Species Listed** the named species is referenced in the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.

GENUS SPECIES **Genus/cultivars listed** while the named species is not specifically referenced in the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan, the genus or specific cultivars within the genus are listed.

Native the named plant is native to Ireland.

THE PLANTING ZONES

3. Well drained and seasonal drought
Plants that prefer well-drained conditions and tolerate drought are suitable for planting in upper slopes of raingardens, bioretention basins and swales.

1. Wet and waterlogged conditions
Plants that tolerate wet soils and periods of waterlogging are suitable for planting in wet swales, pond margins, constructed wetlands and wet meadows. They may not be suitable for planting in raingardens that are located in urban areas or retrofitted into streetscapes.

2. Seasonally wet but drain between wet periods
Plants that thrive in drained soils but tolerate seasonal wetness are suitable for planting in raingardens and bioretention basins, swale sideslopes and pond margins.

RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

pg. 14–18

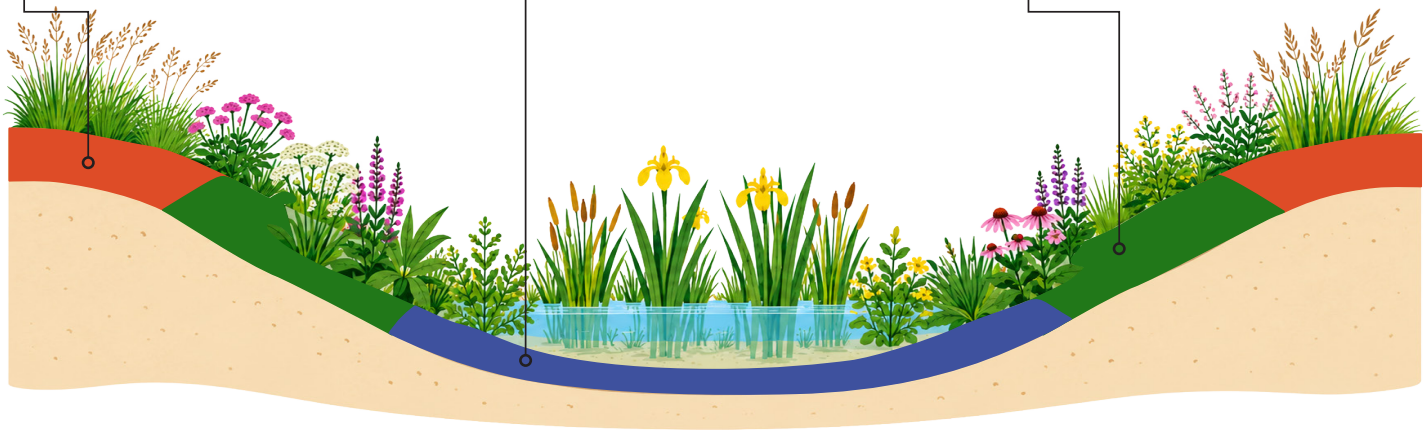
3 **Well drained and seasonal drought**
Suitable for planting in upper slopes of raingardens, bioretention basins and swales

pg. 5–7

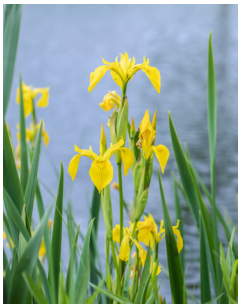
1 **Wet and waterlogged conditions**
Suitable for planting in wet swales, pond margins, constructed wetlands and wet meadows

pg. 8–13

2 **Seasonally wet but drain between wet periods**
Suitable for planting in raingardens, bioretention basins, swale sideslopes and pond margins



Plants suitable for wet swales, pond margins, constructed wetlands and wet meadows.



Iris pseudacorus

Yellow flag iris

Aquatic perennial with large architectural foliage and showy yellow flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
May-Jul	1.0-1.5	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.6-1.0	High	High

Maintenance: Remove dead foliage in late Winter if required. Divide rhizomes every 5-10 years to control aggressive spread and maintain vigour.

Note: *Potentially harmful if eaten; use gloves and assess public access risk. Can be too vigorous for urban schemes.*



Lythrum salicaria

Purple loosestrife

Herbaceous perennial with dense purple flower spikes.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Sept	1.0-1.5	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-1.0	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back stems in late Winter or early Spring. Divide clumps every 4-6 years to maintain vigour.



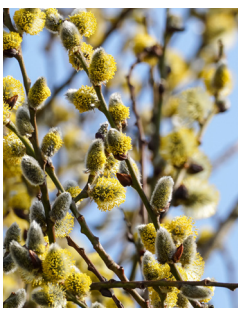
Angelica sylvestris

Wild angelica

Tall, architectural perennial bearing large, white or pale pink dome-shaped umbels.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Sept	1.0 - 2.0	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.8	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back dead stems in late Winter or allow seedheads to stand through Winter for habitat and visual interest. Self-seeds readily if conditions suit.



Salix cinerea

Willow

Small tree bearing attractive catkins in Spring.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Spring	4-10+	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	4.0-8.0	Medium	High

Maintenance: Inspect annually. Can be coppiced every 3-7 years to maintain size and encourage vigorous growth.

Note: *Root systems require adequate space away from underground services. Coppice only under an agreed maintenance regime. Not suitable for formal urban setting.*



Juncus effusus

Soft rush

Clump-forming, evergreen wetland plant with inconspicuous flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Year-round	0.8-1.5	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.6-1.0	Medium	High

Maintenance: Comb through the clump from the base outward to pull away dead or damaged foliage.



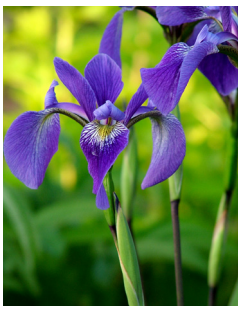
Carex nigra, riparia, acutiformis

Sedges

Tussock-forming, wetland perennial with bluish-green leaves and inconspicuous flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Year-round	0.3-1.2	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.4-1.0	Medium	High

Maintenance: Comb through to pull away dead or damaged foliage.



Iris x robusta

Perennial featuring purple-blue flowers and strong architectural form.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Apr-Jun	0.8-1.2	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.6-1.0	High	Medium

Maintenance: Remove spent flower stems down to the base after flowering and cut foliage back in late Winter. Divide rhizomes every 4-6 years if clumps become congested.



Filipendula ulmaria

Meadowsweet

Moisture loving, scented perennial bearing large frothy cream flower heads.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Aug	1.0-1.8	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.6-1.0	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back dead stems to ground in late Winter or early Spring. Divide clumps every 4-5 years if required.

Suitable for planting in wet swales, pond margins, constructed wetlands and wet meadows



Caltha palustris

Marsh marigold

Clump-forming, wetland perennial producing loose clusters of golden-yellow flowers in early Spring.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Mar-May	0.3-0.6	Medium	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.3-0.5	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back flower stems and dead foliage after flowering if desired. Divide clumps every 4-5 years if they become overcrowded.



Geum rivale

Water avens

Clump-forming, wetland perennial producing copper-pink flowers and delicate seedheads.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Apr-Jun	0.3-0.6	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.4	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back old flower stems and dead foliage in early Spring. Divide clumps every 4-5 years if required.



Eupatorium cannabinum

Hemp agrimony

Tall herbaceous perennial with large domed clusters of dusky pink flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Sept	1.2-2.0	High	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.8-1.2	High	High

Maintenance: Leave seedheads standing through Winter for shelter and food. Cut back dead stems in Spring.



Deschampsia cespitosa

Tufted hair grass

Clump-forming, perennial grass producing delicate flower panicles.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Feb	0.6-1.5	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-1.0	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut back old foliage to the base in late Winter or early Spring before new growth emerges.

Suitable for planting in wet swales, pond margins, constructed wetlands and wet meadows

NATIVE POLLINATORS BIRD FOOD WILDLIFE SHELTER

Plants suitable for raingardens, bioretention basins, swale sideslopes and pond margins.



Iris siberica

Siberian iris

Herbaceous perennial with narrow blue-green leaves and elegant purple flowers with white and yellow markings.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
May-Jul	0.6-1.0	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.45-0.75	High	Medium

Maintenance: Remove spent flower stems and cut back foliage in early Spring before new growth emerges. Divide clumps every 4-5 years.



Molinia caerulea

Purple moor grass

Clump-forming, perennial grass with upright habit, brown-purple flower panicles, and golden autumn colour.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Feb	0.8-1.8	High	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-1.0	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut back foliage and stems to ground in early Spring before new growth emerges. Divide every few years to maintain vigour.

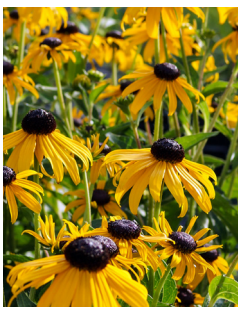


Astilbe chinensis 'Purple Lance'

Herbaceous perennial producing attractive purple flower plumes and fine textured foliage.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Aug	0.8-1.2	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-0.8	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut back spent flower stems and dead foliage to 2-4 inches above ground in early Spring. Divide clumps every 3-5 years to maintain vigour. Supplemental watering may be required during prolonged drought.



Rudbeckia fulgida 'Goldsturm'

Orange Coneflower

Clump-forming, herbaceous perennial producing masses of bright yellow flowers. Seedheads add Winter interest.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Oct	0.6-0.9	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-0.8	High	High

Maintenance: Leave seedheads standing through Winter for shelter and food. Cut back dead stems in early Spring. Divide clumps every 4-5 years if required.

Suitable for planting in raingardens, bioretention basins, swale sideslopes and pond margins



Viburnum opulus

Guelder rose

Deciduous shrub or small tree producing white lacecap flowers, red autumn berries, and excellent autumn foliage colour.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
May-Dec	3-5	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	2-4	High	High

Maintenance: Prune lightly after flowering. Avoid pruning in Winter or Spring as blooms are borne on previous year's wood. Remove dead or crossing branches every few years. Rejuvenation pruning can be carried out every 5-10 years if needed.



Lychnis flos-cuculi

Ragged Robin

Herbaceous perennial producing distinctive star-like pink flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
May-Jul	0.3-0.7	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.3-0.5	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back to ground level in late autumn or early Spring.



Succisa pratensis

Devil's-bit scabious

Tall perennial producing violet-blue pincushion flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Oct	0.4-1	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.3-0.5	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back in late autumn or early Spring.

Biodiversity Note: *Important food for larvae of the endangered Marsh Fritillary butterfly*



Achillea ptarmica

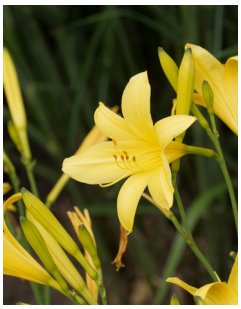
Sneezewort

Herbaceous perennial producing masses of daisy-like white flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Sept	0.6-1.0	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.4-0.7	High	High

Maintenance: Leave seedheads standing through Winter for shelter. Cut back all stems to 5-10cm in Spring before new growth appears. Divide every 3-5 years to manage spread.

Suitable for planting in raingardens, bioretention basins, swale sideslopes and pond margins



Hemerocallis lilioasphodelus

Day lily

Herbaceous, clump-forming perennial producing trumpet like, lemon-yellow flowers and architectural foliage.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Jul	0.6-1.0	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-1.0	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut back dead or damaged foliage in early Spring. Divide clumps every 4-5 years.



Rodgersia pinnata 'Superba'

Clump-forming, herbaceous perennial with large bronze-green foliage and feathery pink flower plumes.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
May-Sept	1.0-1.5	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	1.0-1.5	High	Medium

Maintenance: Remove old flower stems and foliage in early Spring before emergence of new growth.



Ligularia dentata

Leopard plant

Clump-forming, herbaceous perennial with bold foliage, crimson stalks and brown-centred bright orange flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Sept	0.8-1.2	Medium	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.8-1.2	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut back foliage and spent flower stalks early Spring. Divide clumps every 4-5 years if required.



Luzula sylvatica

Great Woodrush

Tussock-forming, evergreen perennial producing airy brown flower panicles.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Year-round	0.3-0.8	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-1.0	Medium	Medium

Maintenance: Remove old, damaged foliage and flower spikes in Spring if required. Divide clumps every 5-7 years to maintain vigour.

Suitable for planting in raingardens, bioretention basins, swale sideslopes and pond margins



Betula pubescens

Downy birch

Deciduous tree with light canopy, grey-white bark and seasonal foliage colour.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Year-round	10-20	Medium	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	5.0-8.0	High	High

Maintenance: Inspect annually. Minimal pruning to remove dead, damaged or crossing branches. Do not prune in late Winter/early Spring to avoid heavy bleeding of sap.



Miscanthus sinensis 'Undine'

Clump-forming grass with elegant arching foliage and attractive flower plumes.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Feb	1.5-2.0	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-1.0	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut foliage to 10-15 cm above ground in early Spring before new growth emerges. Divide every 8-10 years to maintain vigour.



Calamagrostis x acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'

Feather reed-grass

Clump-forming grass with strong upright form, attractive flower plumes.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Feb	1.0-1.8	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.6-1.2	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut back old growth to 15-30 cm in early Spring before new shoots emerge. Divide every 3-5 years to maintain vigour.



Phlomis russeliana

Herbaceous perennial with grey-green basal leaves with soft velvety feel and distinctive tiers of yellow flowers and persistent seedheads.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Sept	0.8-1.2	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	1.0	High	High

Maintenance: Leave stems standing through Winter for wildlife value. Cut back in early Spring as new growth emerges. Divide if necessary.



Viburnum x bodnantense 'Dawn'

Large, deciduous shrub, clusters of fragrant pink flowers on bare wood in Winter.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Nov-Apr	2.5 - 3.0	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	1.5 -2.5	High	Medium

Maintenance: Inspect annually. Prune immediately after flowering in early Spring to remove dead, damaged, or crossing stems. Flowers appear on old wood so do not prune late in season.



Camassia leichtlinii

Great Camas

Bulbous herbaceous perennial producing narrow basal leaves and spikes of starry blue or white flowers in Spring.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
May-Jun	0.8-1.2	Medium	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.2-0.4	High	High

Maintenance: Allow foliage to die back naturally after flowering to replenish bulbs. Divide clumps in Summer every 5-7 years to maintain vigour.



Camassia quamash

Common Camas

Bulbous herbaceous perennial producing long narrow leaves and upright stems bearing star shaped blue flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Apr-Jun	0.3-0.6	Medium	High
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.15-0.3	High	High

Maintenance: Allow foliage to die back naturally after flowering. Divide congested clumps every 5-7 years if required.



Leucojum aestivum

Summer Snowflake

Tall, bulbous perennial long, narrow leaves and delicate white bell-shaped flowers with green dots on the tip of each petal.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Apr-May	0.5-0.7	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.10-0.2	High	High

Maintenance: Allow foliage to die back naturally after flowering. Divide congested clumps every 5-7 years if required.

Suitable for planting in raingardens, bioretention basins, swale sideslopes and pond margins



Galanthus nivalis

Common snowdrop

Small, bulbous perennial plant producing narrow grey-green leaves and nodding stems with white, bell shaped, green-tipped flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jan-Feb	0.1-0.2	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	Visual Impact	Biodiversity
	0.1	High	Medium

Maintenance: Allow foliage to die back naturally after flowering. Divide congested clumps right after flowering every 5-7 years if required.



Fritillaria meleagris

Snake's head fritillary

Bulbous perennial plant producing narrow green leaves and nodding purple or pink patterned flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Apr-May	0.1-0.5	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	Visual Impact	Biodiversity
	0.1	High	High

Maintenance: Allow foliage to die back naturally after flowering.



Scilla hyacinthoides

Bulbous perennial plant producing tall spikes of star shaped blue flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Apr-Jun	0.5-1	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	Visual Impact	Biodiversity
	0.1-0.5	High	Medium

Maintenance: Remove spent flower spikes. Allow foliage to die back naturally after flowering.

Suitable for planting in raingardens, bioretention basins, swale sideslopes and pond margins

Plants suitable for upper slopes of raingardens, bioretention basins and swales.



Echinacea pallida

Herbaceous perennial producing large flowers with drooping pale pink petals surrounding an orange-brown central cone.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Sept	0.8-1.2	Low	Medium
	Spread (m)	Visual Impact	Biodiversity
	0.4-0.6	High	High

Maintenance: Leave seedheads over Winter for wildlife. Cut to ground in early Spring before emergence of new growth. Divide every 4-5 years to maintain vigour.



Perovskia atriplicifolia 'Blue Spire'

Russian sage

Deciduous, upright, multi-stemmed plant with silver-white stems and tall flower stems bearing small violet-blue flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Nov	1.0-1.5	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	Visual Impact	Biodiversity
	0.5-1.0	High	High

Maintenance: Leave stems overWinter for food. Cut back to 6-12 inches in Spring to encourage vigorous new growth and flowering.



Calamintha nepeta

Bushy perennial plant producing masses of tiny white to pale lilac flowers on aromatic foliage.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Oct	0.3-0.6	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	Visual Impact	Biodiversity
	0.4-0.8	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back old growth to ground level in early Spring before new growth emerges. Divide every 3-5 years if required.



Salvia nemorosa 'Ostfriesland'

East Friesland sage

Clump-forming herbaceous perennial producing spikes of violet-blue flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Sep	0.45-0.75	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	Visual Impact	Biodiversity
	0.45-0.60	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back first flush of flower spikes by half after flowering to encourage second flush of flowers. Cut back all dead stems and foliage in early Spring before new growth emerges.



Achillea filipendulina 'Coronation Gold'

Fernleaf Yarrow

Clump-forming herbaceous perennial with grey-green leaves and tall stems bearing flat-topped yellow flower heads.

Season Jun-Sept
Height (m) 0.9-1.2
Spread (m) 0.6-0.9
Water Quality Medium
Visual Impact High
Water Quantity Medium
Biodiversity High

Maintenance: May need staking. Leave seedheads over Winter for wildlife. Cut back dead stems and foliage in early Spring before new growth emerges. Divide every 3-5 years to maintain vigour and control spread.



Knautia arvensis

Field Scabious

Herbaceous perennial producing soft lavender-blue pincushion flowers on tall wiry stems.

Season Jun-Sept
Height (m) 0.6-1.2
Spread (m) 0.5
Water Quality Low
Visual Impact High
Water Quantity Low
Biodiversity High

Maintenance: Deadhead to encourage continuous flowering. Leave stems overWinter for food. Cut back old dead stems to base before new growth emerges.



Geranium rozanne

Cranesbill Rozanne

Herbaceous perennial which produces masses of violet-blue flowers over a mound of finely cut leaves.

Season May-Nov
Height (m) 0.4-0.6
Spread (m) 0.8
Water Quality Medium
Visual Impact High
Water Quantity Low
Biodiversity High

Maintenance: Cut back in Winter after frost. Trim lightly in midsummer to refresh growth if needed.



Gaura lindheimeri

Herbaceous perennial which produces masses of starry white or pink flowers on slender erect stems.

Season Jun-Oct
Height (m) 0.6-1.2
Spread (m) 0.4-0.8
Water Quality Medium
Visual Impact High
Water Quantity Low
Biodiversity High

Maintenance: Cut back stems in early Spring. Light trimming in midsummer can encourage a fresh flush of flowers.

Suitable for planting in upper slopes of raingardens, bioretention basins and swales

NATIVE POLLINATORS BIRD FOOD WILDLIFE SHELTER



Achillea millefolium

Common Yarrow

Herbaceous perennial which produces flat topped flower clusters in white or soft pink on ferny foliage.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Sept	0.3-0.8	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.3-0.6	High	High

Maintenance: Deadhead to prolong flowering during season. Leave seedheads over Winter for wildlife. Cut back to ground in Spring.



Stipa gigantea

Golden Oats

Evergreen grass with large panicles of oat-like flowers maturing to gold in Summer-Autumn.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Year-round	1.5-2.5	Medium	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-1.2	High	Medium

Maintenance: Comb through to remove dead, brown leaves and old flower stems in early Spring.



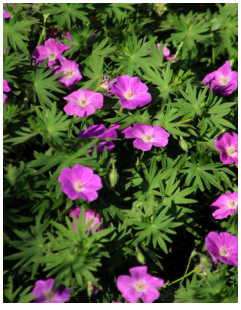
Primula vulgaris

Primrose

Perennial plant, leaves form low basal rosette and produces attractive pale-yellow flowers.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Feb-May	0.1-0.2	Low	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.3	High	High

Maintenance: Remove old foliage if required and divide clumps every few years.



Geranium sanguineum

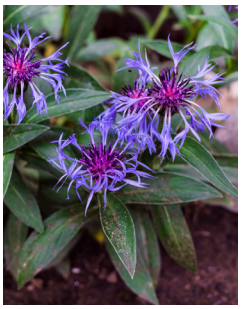
Bloody crane's bill

Clump-forming herbaceous perennial bearing bright magenta-pink flowers with dark veining on mounds of foliage.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Sept	0.2-0.4	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.6	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut dead foliage back to about 10 cm above the ground after first frost. Divide every few years if required.

Suitable for planting in upper slopes of raingardens, bioretention basins and swales



Centaurea montana 'Jordy'

Clump-forming herbaceous perennial with distinctive fringed purple-blue flowers and attractive foliage.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
May-Jul	0.4-0.6	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.4-0.6	High	High

Maintenance: Cut back after flowering to encourage second flush of flowers. Cut back foliage in autumn after first frosts. Divide clumps every 3-4 years.



Kniphofia 'Percy's Pride'

Clump-forming herbaceous perennial bearing large elegant creamy-yellow flower spikes.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jun-Sept	0.8-1.0	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.5-0.7	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut back old flower spikes to base after flowering. Comb out dead and damaged foliage in Spring as fresh growth emerges. Divide every 3-5 years to maintain vigour.

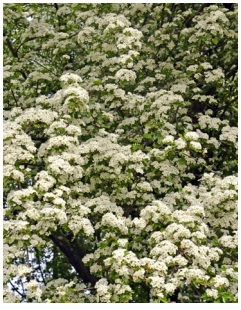


Kniphofia 'Tawny King'

Herbaceous perennial with bi-colour apricot-orange flower spikes.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Jul-Sept	0.8-1.2	Low	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	0.8-1.2	High	Medium

Maintenance: Cut back old flower spikes after flowering. Comb out dead and damaged foliage in Spring as fresh growth emerges. Divide every 3-5 years to maintain vigour.



Crataegus monogyna

Hawthorn

Deciduous tree with white Spring blossom and autumn berries.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
May-Oct	5-10	Low	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	3-5	High	High

Maintenance: Minimal pruning required unless maintained as a hedge. Prune during dormant period (Nov-Feb).

Suitable for planting in upper slopes of raingardens, bioretention basins and swales



Euonymus europaeus

Spindle

Small tree with small white-green flowers and striking Autumn 4-lobed pink fruits which split to reveal orange seeds. Good Autumn leaf colour.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
Spring-Autumn	3-6	Low	Medium
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	2-4	High	High

Maintenance: Remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches in late Winter or early Spring.



Sorbus aucuparia

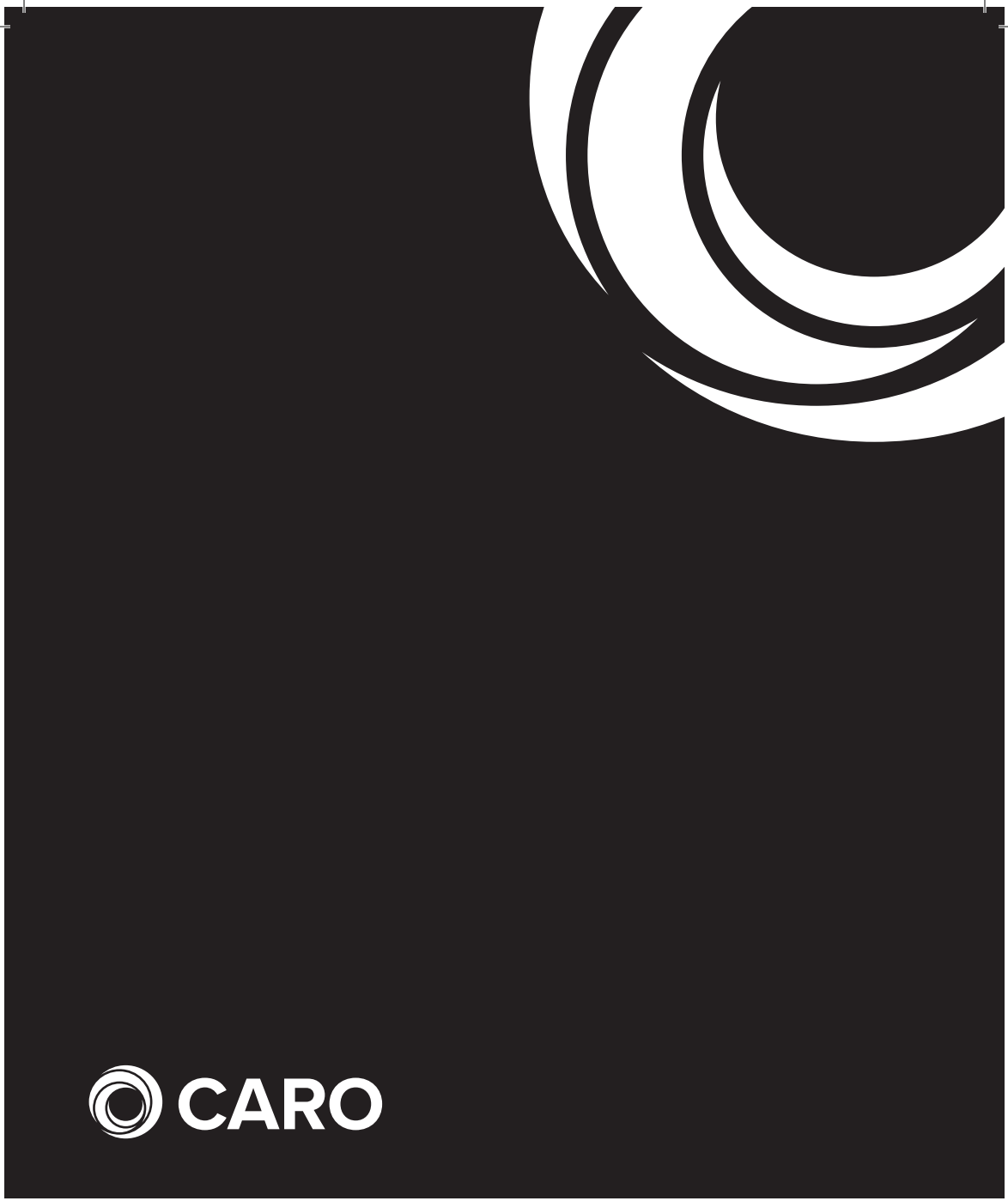
Rowan

Tree produces masses of cream coloured Spring flowers, bright orange-red berries, and autumn leaf colour.

Season	Height (m)	Water Quality	Water Quantity
May-Nov	6-12	Low	Low
	Spread (m)	**Visual Impact**	**Biodiversity**
	4.0-6.0	High	High

Maintenance: Remove dead, damaged, or crossing branches in Winter.

Suitable for planting in upper slopes of raingardens, bioretention basins and swales



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