

Lake Waramaug Buffer Planting

The lakeshore buffer planting is the first on the lake designed to protect Waramaug's water quality while providing a beautiful low energy, low maintenance shore-planting that is an alternative to grass. Buffer plantings can also be used near streams, ponds or in any setting.

This project was made possible by The Lake Waramaug Task Force, The Lake Waramaug Association, The Washington Environmental Council, The Washington Garden Club, landscape architect Dirk Sabin (who donated the design), the Kent Greenhouse (who did the planting) and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Lecher who kindly have welcomed visitors to their property. Please visit often and see its beauty in all four seasons.

The following is a list of plants used on the site:

Trees and Shrubs

- Betula papyrifera* - Paper Birch
- Cornus stolonifera* - Red Osier Dogwood
- Hamamelis virginiana* - Witch Hazel
- Vaccinium corymbosum* - Highbush Blueberry

Wetland Garden/Biofilter

- Typha angustifolia* - Narrow-leaved Cattail
- Iris versicolor* - Blue Flag Iris
- (beware the yellow iris is invasive!!!)
- Lobelia cardinalis* - Cardinal Flower
- Sagittaria latifolia* - Arrowhead
- Carex stricta* - Tussock Sedge
- Scirpus validus* - Soft-stem Bulrush
- Pontederia cordata* - Pickerelweed
- Caltha palustris* - Marsh Marigold

Lakeside Wildflower Buffer

- Eupatorium maculatum* - Joe Pye Weed
- Verbena hastata* - Blue Vervain
- Monarda didyma* - Bee Balm (red)
- Monarda fistulosa* - Wild Bergamot (violet)
- Aster novae-angliae* - New England Aster
- Onoclea sensibilis* - Sensitive Fern
- Osmunda regalis* - Royal Fern
- Rudbeckia hirta* - Black Eyed Susan
- Thalictrum dasycarpum* - Purple Meadow Rue
- Thalictrum thalictroides* - Wind Flower
- Osmunda cinnamomea* - Cinnamon Fern
- Schizachyrium scoparium* - Little Bluestem Grass

Birch Grove Understory

- Polystichum acrostichoides* - Christmas Fern
- Athyrium filix-femina* - Lady Fern
- Dryopteris sp.* - Wood Ferns
- Dryopteris marginalis* - Marginal Wood Fern
- Dryopteris intermedia* - Intermediate Wood Fern





Lake Waramaug Task Force

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For many years The Lake Waramaug Task Force has been concerned that more nutrients are reaching the lake from shoreline lawns. Manicured lawns are gradually replacing the native plantings along the shore that helped protect lake water quality by slowing down storm run-off and absorbing nutrients, especially phosphorus and nitrogen. These nutrients feed and spur the excessive growth of algae and lake water weeds.

In an effort to stem this trend and "turn back the clock" the Task Force conceived a plan to develop a model native plant shoreline buffer designed to protect water quality. The idea was to create an attractive shoreline of native plantings that would demonstrate how it protects water quality and at the same time would be very attractive, provide low maintenance and low energy consumption compared to a suburban lawn.

Several years ago the Lake Waramaug Association reached an agreement with Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Lecher that would permit the Association and the Task Force to use the lengthy and highly visible Lecher shoreline lawn area as a site for such a model planting plan. Other area environmental organizations were asked to contribute to and support this project. The hope was that with broad support this plan would be able to demonstrate the advantages of using a native planting plan not only on Waramaug, but to protect the water quality of all area lakes, ponds and streams.

The Lake Waramaug Association and The Washington Environmental Council made a major contribution to this project. The Washington Garden Club also contributed and all the organizations are promoting shoreline planting plans to their memberships. Recently the Northwest Conservation District included a special section in its annual plant sale offering a collection of plants specifically designed to be used to create a shoreline planting buffer for water quality protection. The District reports that there was considerable interest in this offering which was sold out!

Recently the sponsoring organizations held an opening event at the Lecher shore line to show and tell how the project came about and how it helps protect water quality. This first event was well attended and received by shoreline owners on Waramaug and from surrounding communities. The sponsoring organizations will continue to promote and educate land owners on the advantages of converting their lawn into a beautiful shoreline planting.