

Native Garden Tour

A project from Homegrown National Park®

What to know

A Native Garden Tour invites people to walk through real native gardens in their own neighborhood — no lecture, no pressure, just seeing what's possible. Seeing a thriving native yard up close does more to convince a skeptical neighbor than any brochure. Tours also give your local native-plant community a reason to connect, share plants and ideas, and show off their work.

Season

Spring, Summer, Fall

For

Communities, Teams, Schools

Event Duration

30+ Minutes

Instructions

Step 1 | Recruit Garden Hosts

Reach out to native gardeners in your network, HNP supporters, Master Gardeners, or local native plant society members.

Aim for gardens within a reasonable driving or walking distance of each other.

Look for variety: a small pollinator patch, a full yard conversion, a rain garden, a schoolyard planting — differences help visitors see options for their own space.

Confirm each host's availability, address, and whether they're comfortable with drop-in visitors or prefer a scheduled window.

Step 2 | Plan the Route

Group gardens by neighborhood or a short driving loop.

Decide: **self-guided** (visitors go at their own pace with a map) or **guided** (small groups move together with a host or volunteer leading).

Set a start and end time; 2–4 hours usually covers 3–6 gardens comfortably, for example.

Step 3 | Plan the Signage

Ask each host to display simple signs identifying:

- Notable native plants
- What wildlife the space supports (bees, butterflies, birds)
- Any "before" photos, if available — before/after is one of the most convincing things you can show



Laminate signage for reuse across events



Have digital notes via a QR code for people to look at as they walk around.

Step 4 | Promote the Tour

Some methods for advertising:

- Email announcement
- Facebook Event
- Flyer for local sharing
- Announcement in your local paper

Optional: Encourage participants to bring a friend.

Here is a general description to help you begin your advertising:

Native Garden Tour

Join us for a self-guided tour of native gardens in [neighborhood/town]. See real yards, patios, and community spaces that support birds, pollinators, and other wildlife — and get ideas for your own space. Free and open to all.

Below is our recommended timeline:

Social media

Post 1–2 weeks before your event (include photos, the film trailer, or graphics)

Create a Facebook event and invite your network

Tag local groups, organizations, or influencers

Email

Send a save-the-date, a reminder 1-2 weeks before, and a final reminder the day before



Ecofriendly



Low Cost

Flyers

Hang them at libraries, cafés, schools, and community centers

Partnerships

Ask local nurseries, conservation groups, or schools to co-host or spread the word

Step 5 | Prepare Materials for Visitors

- Printed or digital map with garden locations and a short description of each
- List of plants featured at each stop, if hosts want to share
- HNP flyers or brochures
- Encourage participants to add their native plants on the [HNP Biodiversity Map](#).

 Instead of printing out a ton of take-home flyers, send your attendees a follow-up email with materials included. If you don't want to collect emails, have them scan a QR code to the materials, and they can choose what to print.

Event Day

Step 6 | Welcome Participants

- Confirm hosts the day before.
- Have a check-in point if you're running it as a group start (or just let self-guided visitors go directly to gardens).
- Encourage hosts to be available for questions, but they don't need to give a formal talk — casual conversation works best.
- Have sign-up sheets or a QR code at each garden so visitors can join your email list or follow up with questions.

Step 7 | Wrap Up

Make sure visitors leave with:

- The garden map/list (as a keepsake and reference)
- An HNP flyer
- A next step — plant a native, add their space to the Map, or host their own garden next year

Encourage participants to add their new native plants on the [HNP Biodiversity Map](#).

Step 8 | Make it Visible

Visibility helps the tour — and the movement — grow.

Encourage hosts and visitors to:

- Take photos of gardens and visitors
- Share using #[YourTourHashtag] and tag @HomegrownNationalPark

Step 9 | Report Back and Help Us Improve!

Sharing your attendance numbers and event details is crucial. Your input directly helps us measure our collective impact and improve our resources. Did you do something special? We would love to see your marketing materials, photos, and hear about unique details to feature and incorporate for future events! [Contribute Your Feedback Here](#)

Keep in Mind

- Create a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere for all ages and abilities.
- Encourage participation and conversation.
- Take photos (avoid people's faces unless permission has been given).
- People want something they can take home to remind them of what they learned and what steps to take next.

Materials

(Complete supply checklist)

- ☐ Garden signage (plant names, wildlife supported)
- ☐ Printed or digital tour map
- ☐ HNP flyers/brochures
- ☐ Sign-up sheets or QR codes for email list
- ☐ Optional: table/chairs for a check-in station
- ☐ Optional: name tags for hosts/volunteers

Related HNP Activities

- [Seed/Plant Giveaway or Swap](#) - Have hosts cut some clippings or gather some seeds for visitors to take home.
- [Mosquito Bucket Building](#) - A great alternative to fogging.
- [Native Plant Container Gardening](#) - Send each visitor home with a native plant to add to the HNP Biodiversity Map.

Examples

