

# Attractive Native and Drought Tolerant Landscaping

**Trevor Smith, Weston Nurseries, Design & Education Manager**

Hosted by the Sherborn Energy and Sustainability Committee  
February 8, 2024

DSC-TV video recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKBQv6Qr6y0>



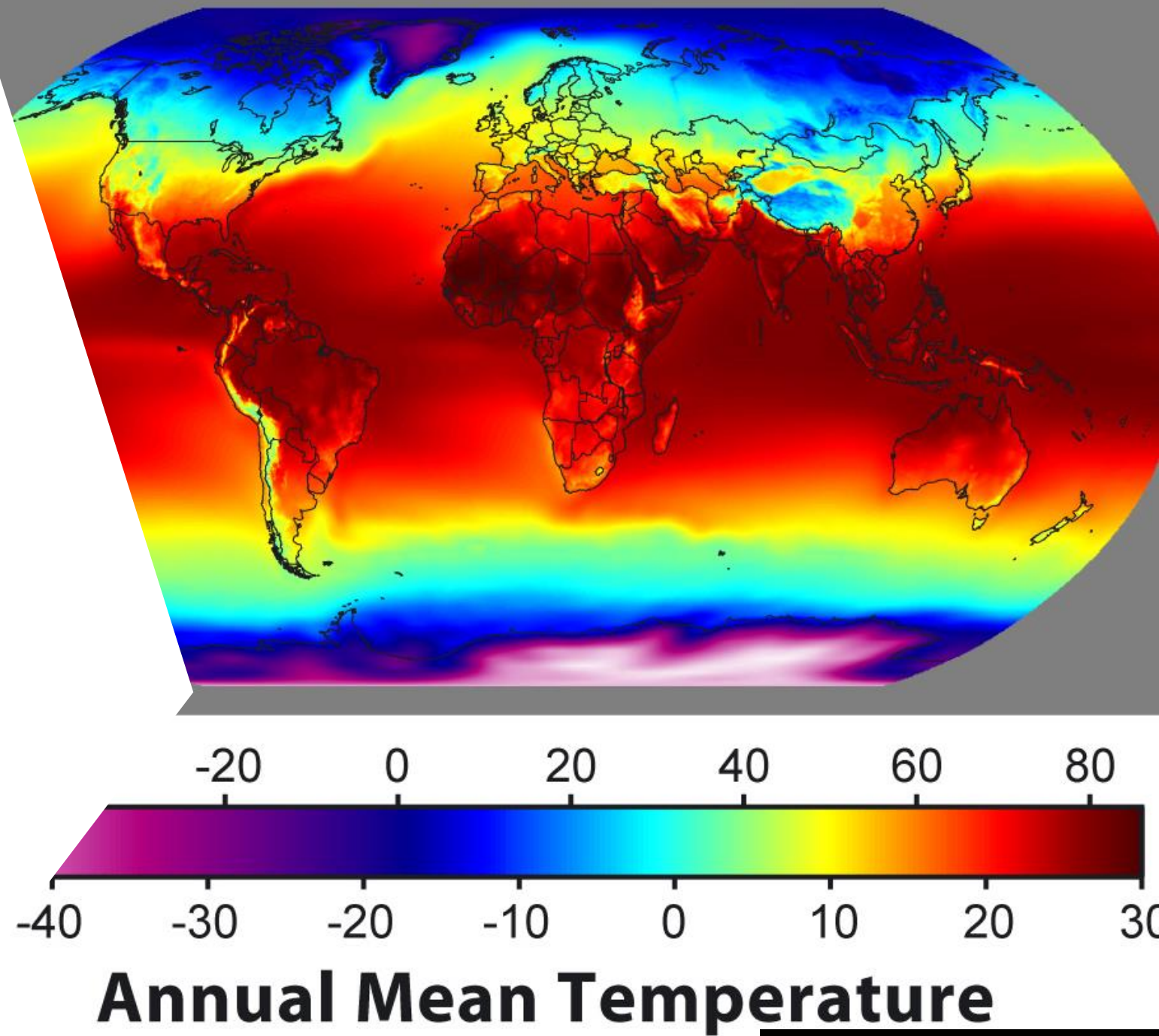
**I WAS JUST IN A  
MEETING WITH PPL  
WHO WERE RECENTLY  
EVACUATED FROM  
WILDFIRE AND PPL  
RECENTLY EVACUATED  
FROM FLOOD.  
LET THAT  
SINK IN.**

- September 3 2021



Temperatures in the New England region increased 3.29 degrees between 1900 and 2020. The rest of the planet warmed 2 degrees over that same time period.

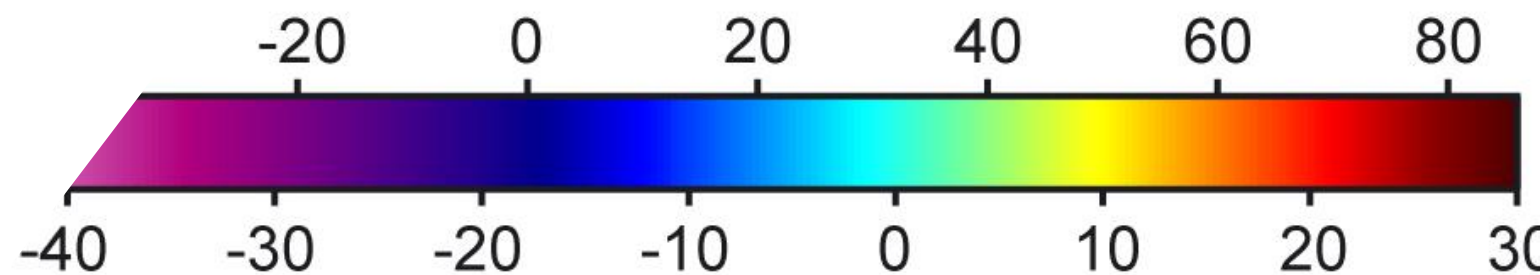
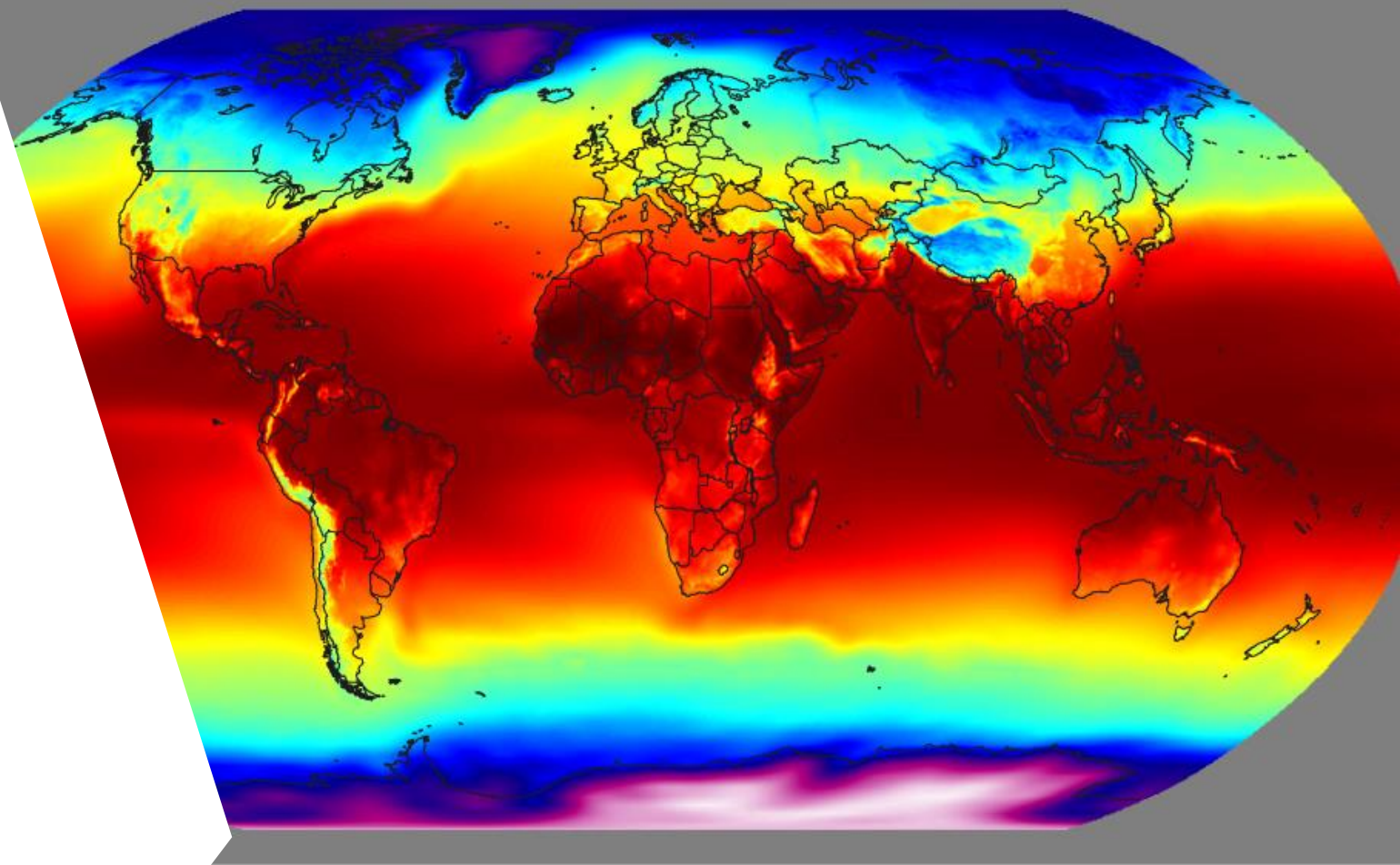
-Stephen S. Young





Temperatures in New England will not return to where they were a century ago, or even stay where they are now. .

-Stephen S. Young



**Annual Mean Temperature**

What Could This  
Mean For Our  
Native Plants?

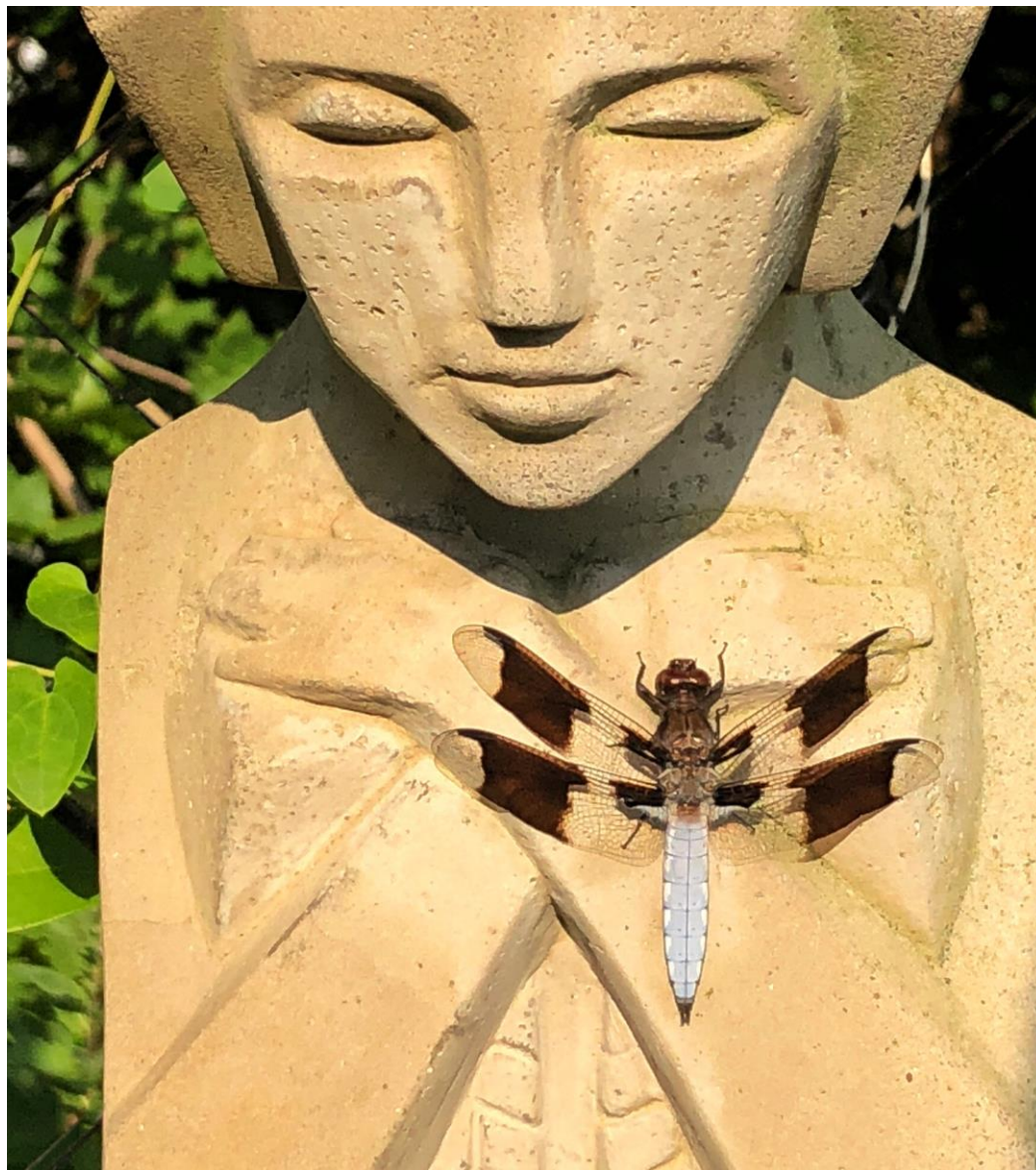




# Without Our Seasons....

Native seeds won't undergo the required cold period to germinate.      Southern invasive plants and insects will be able to move north.

The timing of blooms and their specialized pollinators, which have evolved over millennia may no longer coincide.	Longer hotter summer and fall seasons will lead to stressed trees, hurting the fall color and leaf peeping season.	Warmer winters will decrease maple syrup production.
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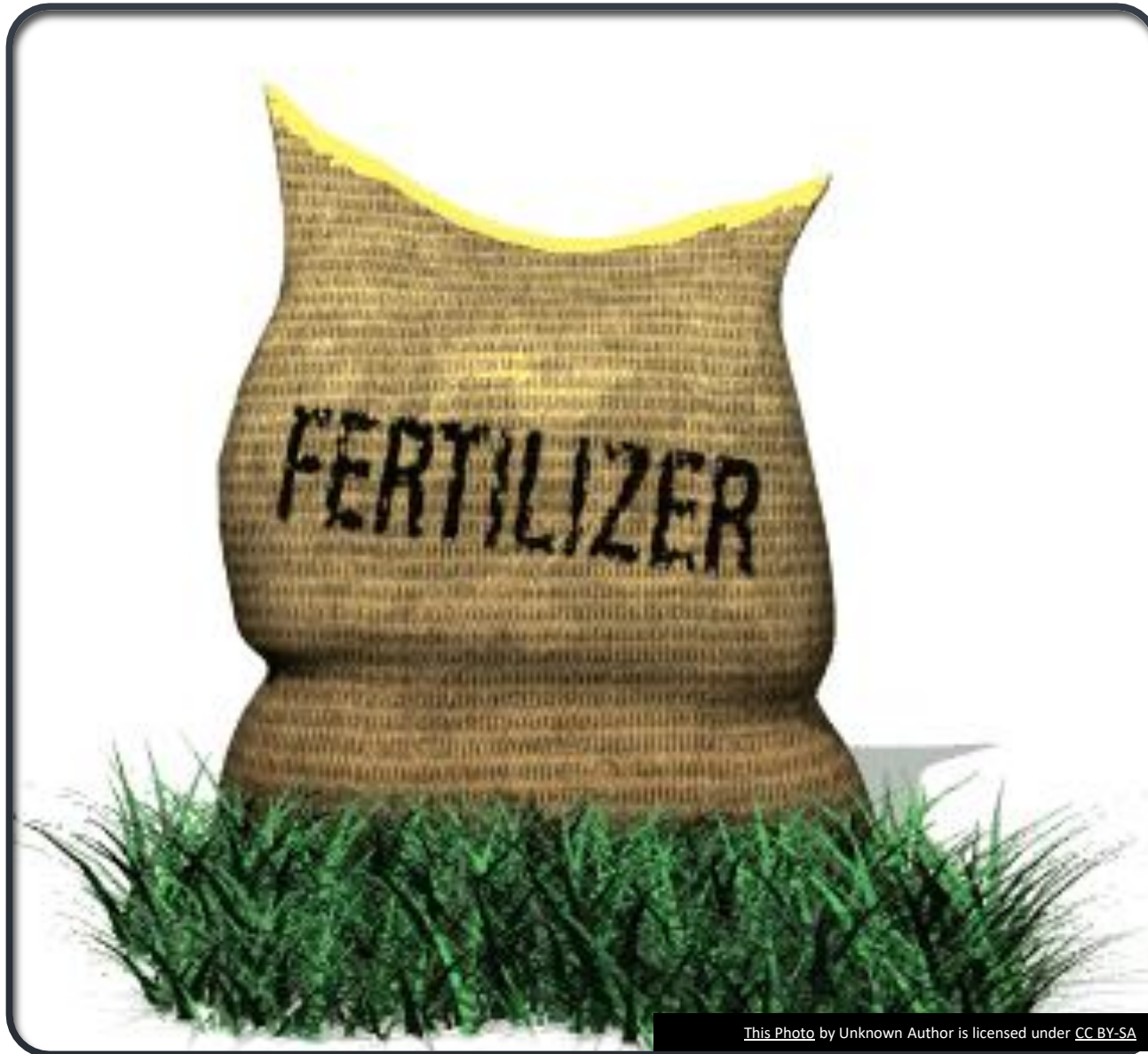






The Days of  
Landscaping for Beauty  
Alone Are Over.



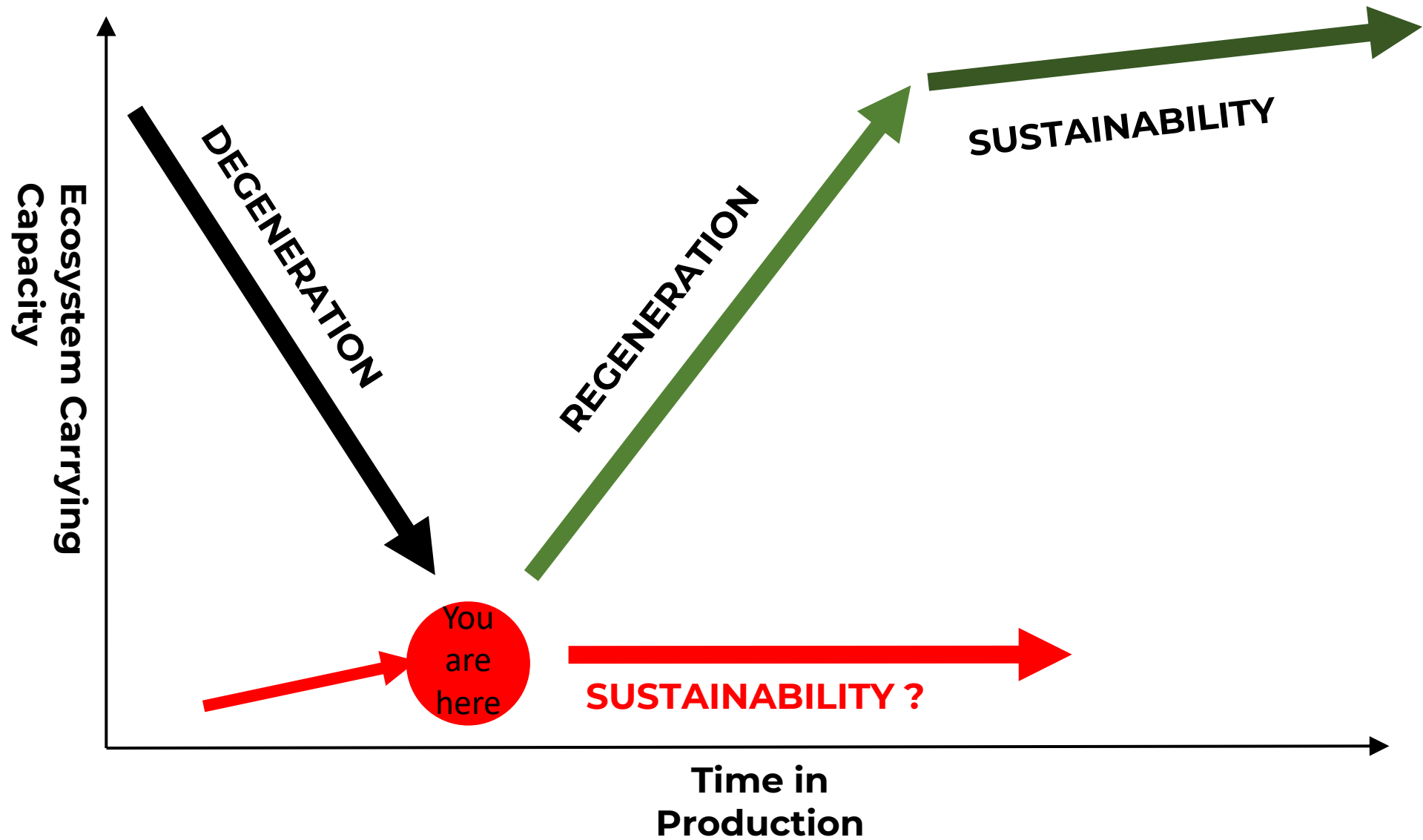



Our current approach to land care is akin to sending plastic rubber and steel to factory, without even knowing who works there and what they need and hoping a car comes out.

This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)









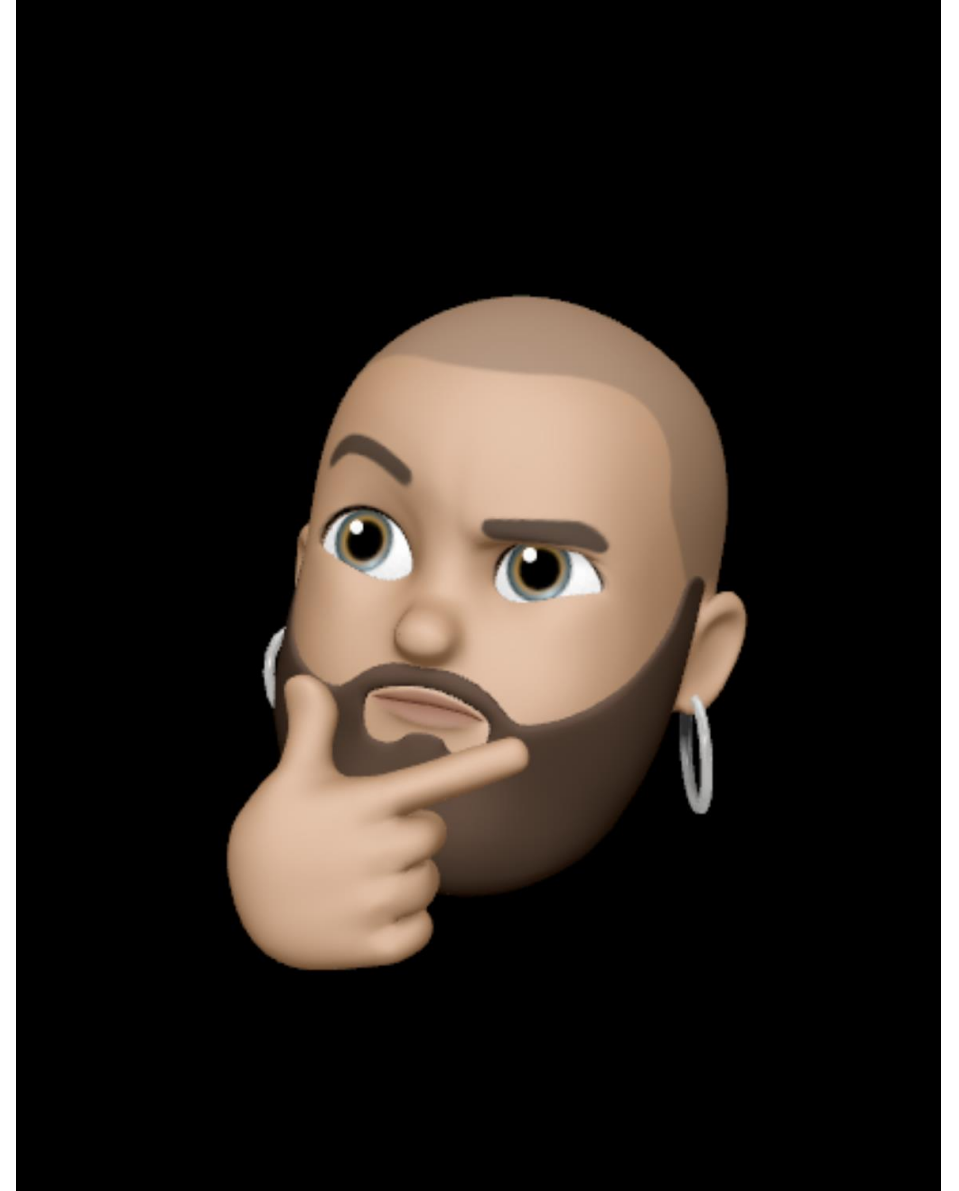
PLANT THE  
CHANGE YOU  
WISH TO SEE  
IN THE WORLD.  
-TREVOR SMITH  
FIELD NOTES







**Sooooo?  
Natives?**



# Terms & Definitions



# Native Plants

**Native plants are plants indigenous to a given area in geologic time. This includes plants that have developed, occur naturally, or existed for many years in an area. Natives can be weeds or aggressive but not invasive.**







# Weeds

**Weeds are any undesirable plant. Or a plant out of place. Weeds can be native, aggressive or invasive.**





# Aggressive Plants

**Aggressive Plants are plants that spread though the garden or landscape faster than we would like. Aggressive plants may dominate but they are not invasive as they do not harm the ecosystem. Aggressive plants can be weeds or natives.**





# Invasive Plants

**Invasive species are plants designated by state or national agricultural authorities as threatening to agricultural and/or horticultural crops and/or humans and livestock. Invasive plants are not native, but they can be considered weeds.**



# Straight Species

The original recipe. The original species of a plant as it evolved through natural selection.



Photo: Wildflower.org



Photo: Prairie Moon Nursery

# Nativar

A cultivated variety of the species. These plants have been cultivated (grown) for specific characteristics such as shorter growth habit, double flowers or longer bloom time etc.



Bluestone Perennials



Bluestone Perennials



Gardenia.net



Gardenia.net

# Ecoregion

Geographic areas determined by common geography, climate and plant communities. New England has 5 ecoregions. We are Ecoregion 59 ( Northeastern Coastal Zone)

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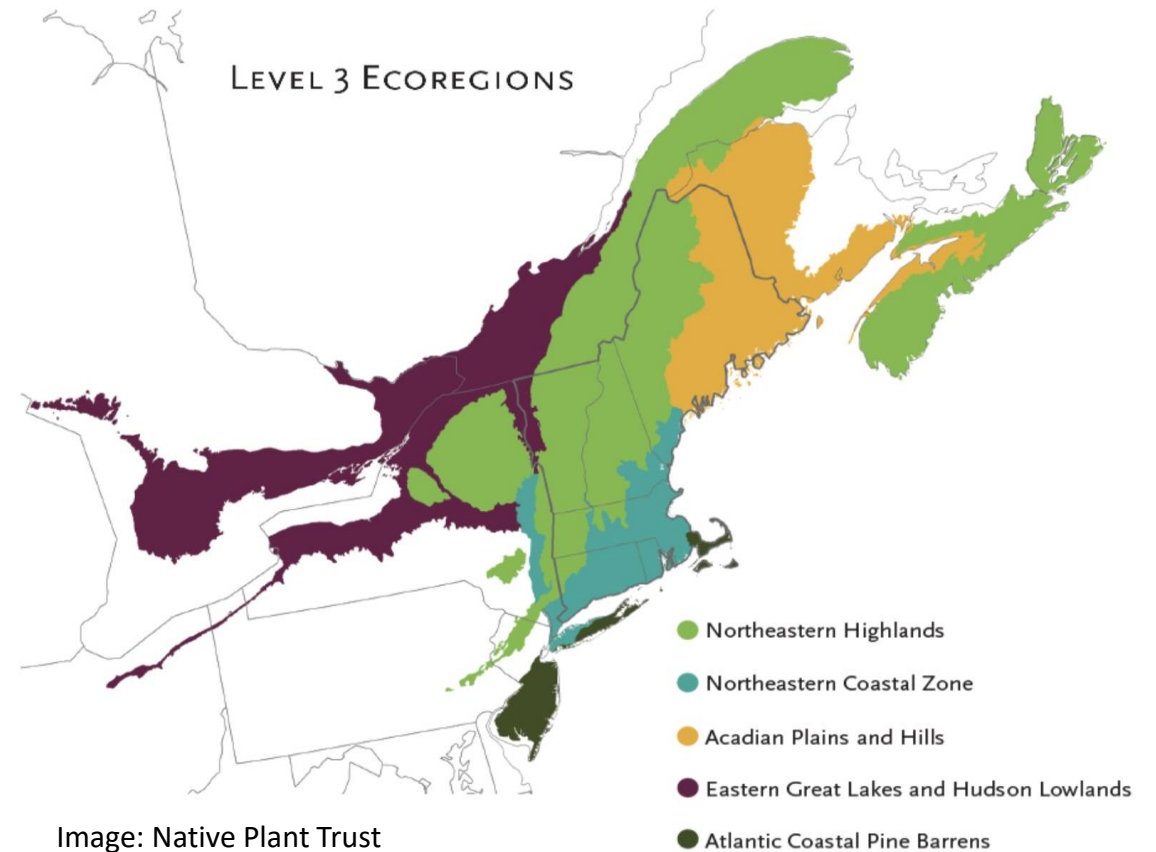


Image: Native Plant Trust



# EcoType

Locally adapted species growing in specific region. EcoType's are plants grown from seed. Native plant seeds gathered from local areas and grown from seed have the characteristics of that area imprinted on their genome. They are better adapted to the local conditions such as weather and soil than plants grown outside the region.





# Biodiversity

The variety of life in a particular habitat or ecosystem.



# Why Natives???





- Honey bee
- Bumble bees



- Honey bee
- Bumble bees
- Mining bees
- Carpenter bees
- Sweat bees
- Mason bees
- Cuckoo bees
- Syrphid flies
- Thick-headed flies
- Fruit beetles
- 27 different species of butterflies and moths

White marked tussock moth

Mining bee, *Anandrena*

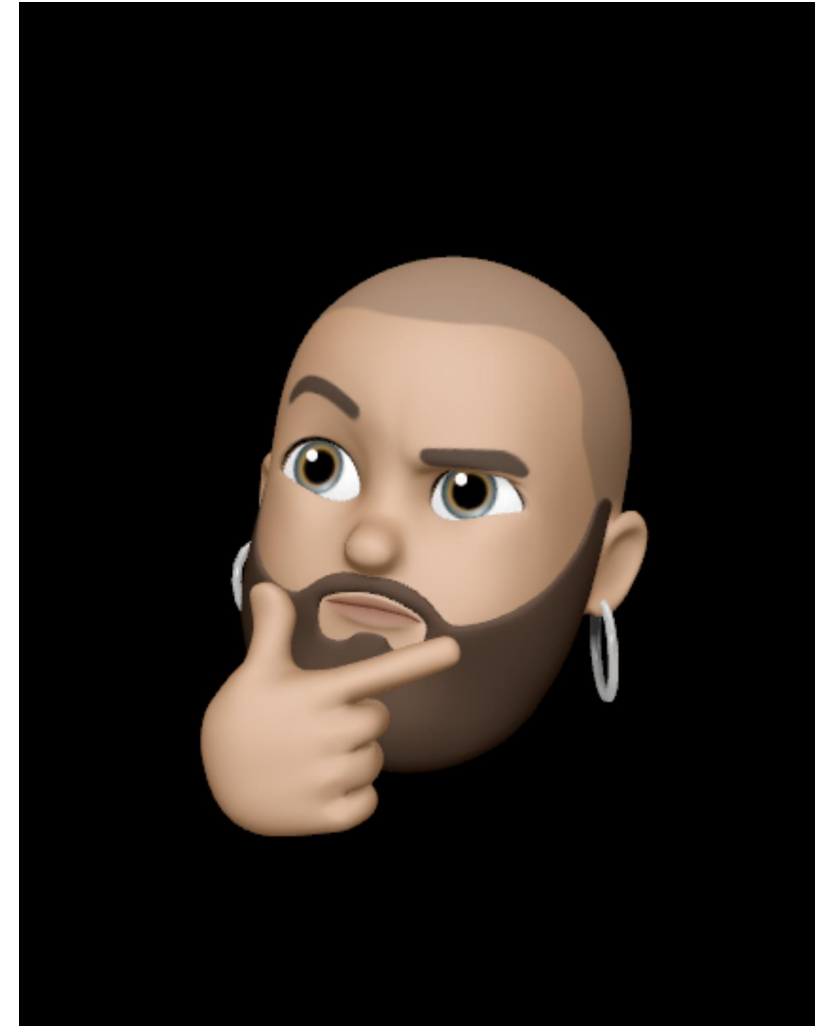
*distans*

White-lined sphinx moth





# Why Does This Matter?



# Sometimes It's Obvious



**Others Are More Subtle...**







Dan Jaffe



Photo: Dan Wilder

**30-40 Million Hectares (74-98million Acres) of native vegetation has been replaced by managed landscapes and non-native ornamental plants.**

**This equals all the land for our National Parks (40m) and ALL the land used for corn production in 2014 (37) COMBINED**



**Studies have shown the use of non-native plants is linked to decline in the abundance and diversity of insects.**

**The decline of insects has resulted in a decline in bird populations.**

**It takes 6,000-9,000 caterpillars to raise a brood of 5 Chickadees**





# The Plants You Choose Could Save A Species...



Bombus Vagans



fieldguide.mt.gov/

Bombus Fervidus



wisconsinbumblebees.entomology.wisc.edu

Bombus Terricola



gbbr.ca



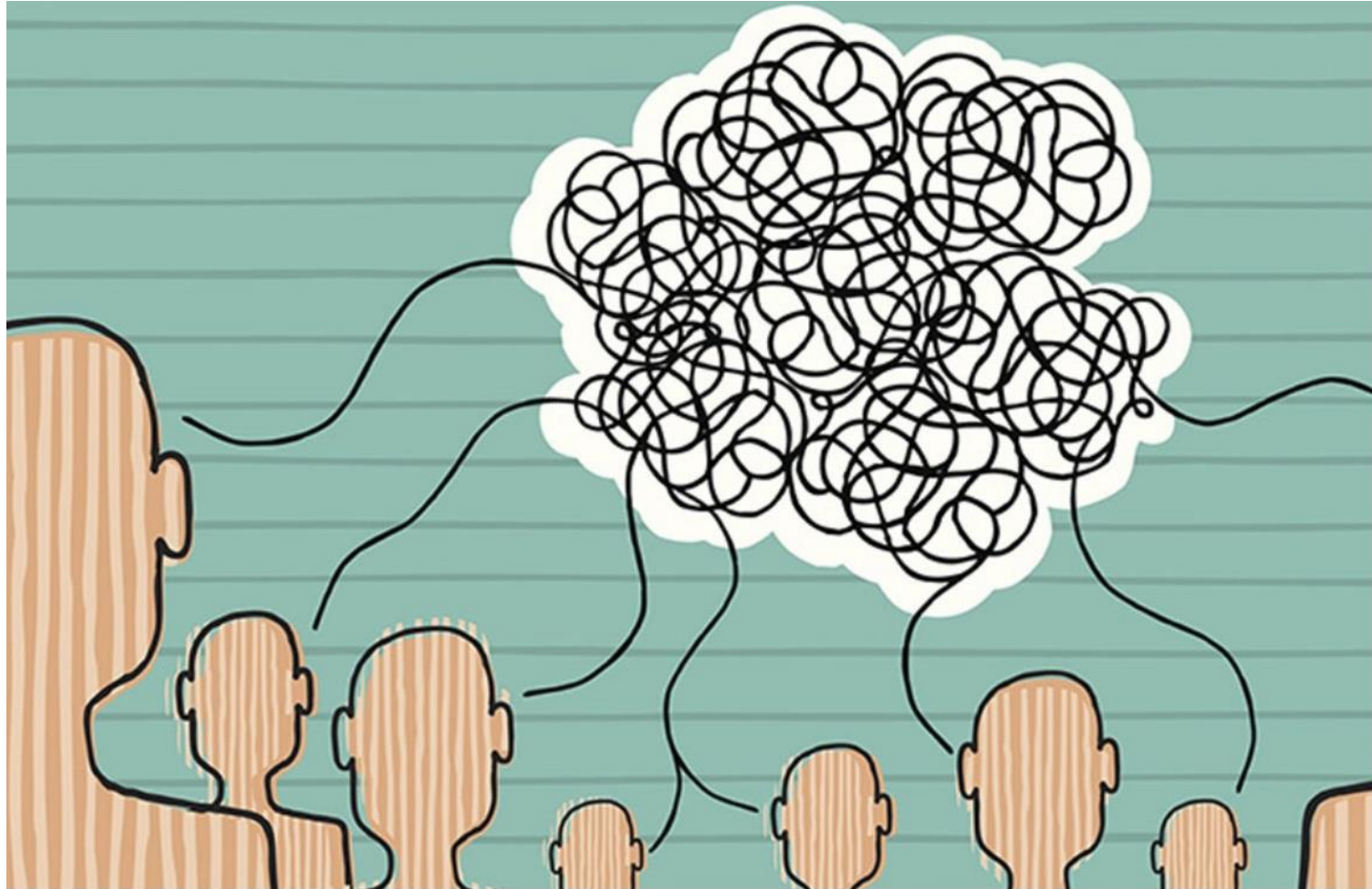


# 15 Highly Effective Native Plants



Penstemon digitalis foxglove beardtongue Steeplebush	Spiraea tomentosa
Penstemon hirsutus Northeastern beardtongue Carolina rose	Rosa Carolina
Physostegia virginiana Obedient plant	Rosa nitida Shining rose
Prunella vulgaris Common selfheal Swamp rose	Rosa palustris
Scutellaria galericulata Hooded skullcap Virginia rose	Rosa virginiana
Mimulus ringens Allegheny monkeyflower White meadowsweet Monarda fistulosa Wild bergamot	Spiraea alba
Monarda didyma Scarlet bee balm	<u>GEGEAR LAB AT UMASS DARTMOUTH</u>
Agastache scrophulariaefolia Purple giant hyssop	

# Common Misconceptions





A photograph of a field of tall, thin grasses, possibly reeds or sedges, with a blue building visible in the background. The grasses are in the foreground, and the building is in the background. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Aha! Just as I suspected! She's  
nothing but a common mobile  
vulgaris!!! –Iris  
Disney's Alice In Wonderland**



# The Truth



The Bloom Time Is Often Shorter

Some Varieties Seed About

They Need Water To Get Established

Once Established They Need Less Water

They Require Fewer Inputs If Any

They Don't Look Messy

They Will Attract Wildlife

There Is A Native Plant For Every  
Situation. Sun, Shade, Lawn  
Alternative, Wet or Dry

Nibbling is OK. If Nothing is Eating Your Garden,  
Something is Wrong.





Nom



Nom



Nom





# Where to Start?



# Why are You Planting Natives?

Low Maintenance

Habitat

Pollinators

Birds

Reduce Lawn

Cover Septic

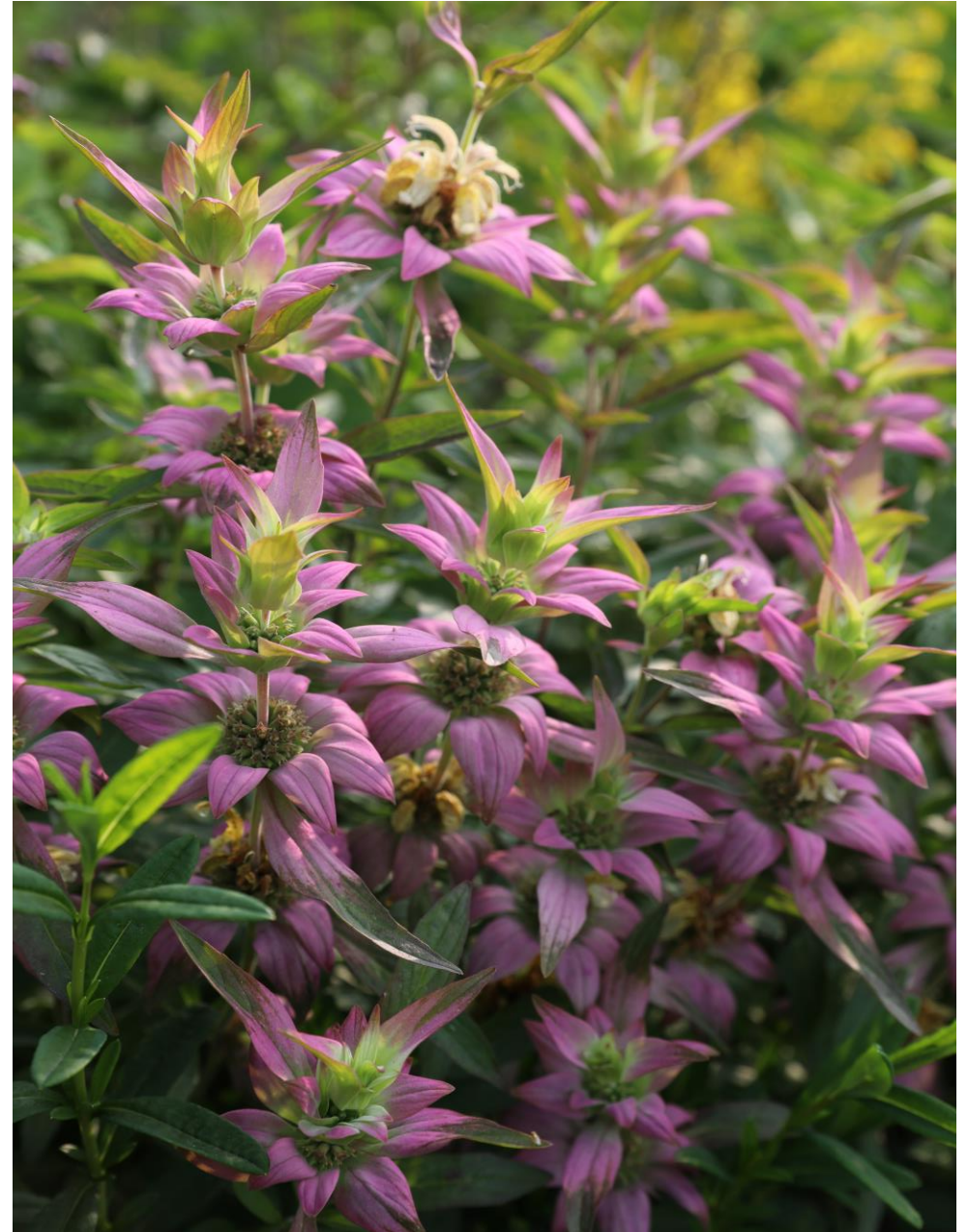


Photo: Dan Wilder



# Understand

Natives and Exotic or Cultivars are NOT The Same

Native Does NOT Mean NO Maintenance

Having Bees is a GOOD Thing. Happy Bees DON'T Sting.

Native Gardens Look BEAUTIFUL!



Photo: Dan Wilder



A wide, green lawn with a line of trees in the background under a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid in the center.

Lawns cover 32 million acres  
of the United States





Sources Of Pollution



A photograph showing two wooden armchairs with slatted backs and seats, positioned in a field of dense, low-growing green plants. The plants appear to be a groundcover species, possibly creeping charlie, which is a common lawn alternative. The chairs are made of a light-colored wood, possibly cedar or teak, and are arranged side-by-side. The background is filled with more of the same green plants, creating a lush, textured environment. The overall scene suggests a garden or park setting where traditional lawns are being replaced by native plant species.

# Lawn Alternatives

Photo Native Plant Trust



A close-up photograph of a clump of Pennsylvania Sedge (Carex pensylvanica) growing in a rocky, shaded area. The sedge has dense, upright, green leaves. In the foreground, there are several large, brown, fallen oak leaves and a small, dark, twig-like object. The ground is composed of light-colored, irregularly shaped rocks.

# Pennsylvania Sedge

Photo Native Plant Trust





Photo Native Plant Trust

SUN: FULL-SHADE

SOIL: AVERAGE – DRY

HEIGHT: 6"-10"

SPREAD: MODERATE

POLLINATORS: YES



A photograph of a field of Purple Love Grass. The grass has long, narrow, green leaves and a dense, upright inflorescence of small, reddish-purple flowers. The background is a blurred field of similar vegetation.

# Purple Love Grass

Photo Native Plant Trust





SUN: FULL

SOIL: AVERAGE – DRY

HEIGHT: 8"-14"

SPREAD: SLOW-MODERATE

POLLINATORS: YES

PHOTO COURTESY OF PRAIRIE MOON NURSERY





# **Prairie Dropseed**

Hoffman ?Nursery





SUN: FULL-PART

SOIL: AVERAGE – DRY

HEIGHT: 12-36"

SPREAD: SLOW TO START,  
VIGOROUS ONCE  
ESTABLISHED

POLLINATORS: Host Plant,  
Song Birds



A dense carpet of Woodland Strawberry plants (Fragaria vesca) covering the ground. The leaves are in various stages of autumn color change, ranging from bright green to deep red and brown. The plants are low-growing and form a continuous mat.

# Woodland Strawberry

Photo Native Plant Trust





SUN: FULL-PART

SOIL: AVERAGE – DRY

HEIGHT: 3"

SPREAD: SLOW TO START,  
VIGOROUS ONCE ESTABLISHED

POLLINATORS: YES





Clover

Photo American Meadows





SUN: FULL-PART

SOIL: AVERAGE – DRY

HEIGHT: 4"-8"

SPREAD: MODERATE

POLLINATORS: YES





# Low Mow Mixes

Photo Pearls Premium



SCAN ME!

Excellent Value for a Premium Product

**As Seen On TV**  
See Our TV+ Range and  
Favorable Reviews at  
PearlPremium.com

**SUN-SHADE MIX**  
For Most Applications  
Except Full Shade or Full Sun

**SafeLawns.org  
APPROVED**

**PEARL'S  
PREMIUM**  
**ULTRA LOW MAINTENANCE**  
**LAWN SEED™**

**People, Pet & Planet Friendly™**

- ✓ CUT ONLY ONCE A MONTH\*
- ✓ SELDOM OR NEVER WATER ONCE ESTABLISHED\*
- ✓ HEALTHY & SAFE - NO CHEMICALS NEEDED\*
- ✓ BAREFOOT SOFT & STAYS GREENER YEAR ROUND\*

\* Please refer to our website for further details: PearlPremium.com

US PATENT PENDING

**NET WEIGHT 25LBS (11.35 kg)** Covers 4,000 - 5,000 sq. ft.



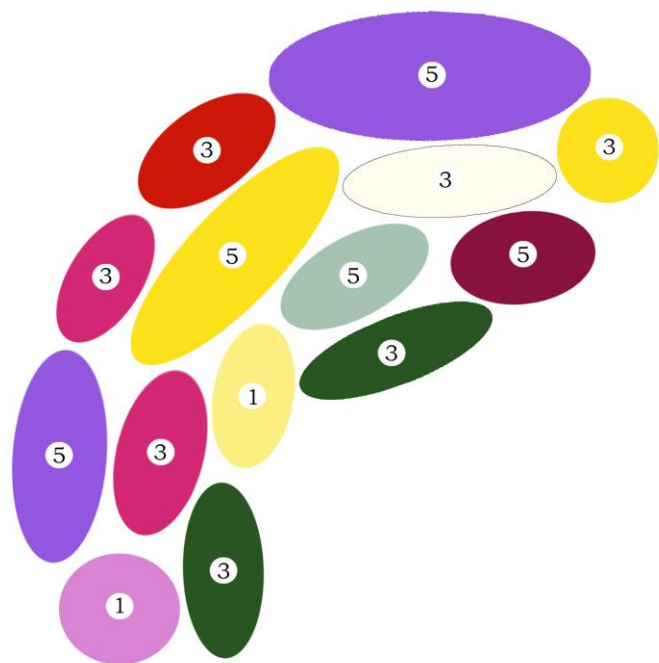
Photo Pearls Premium & North Country Organics



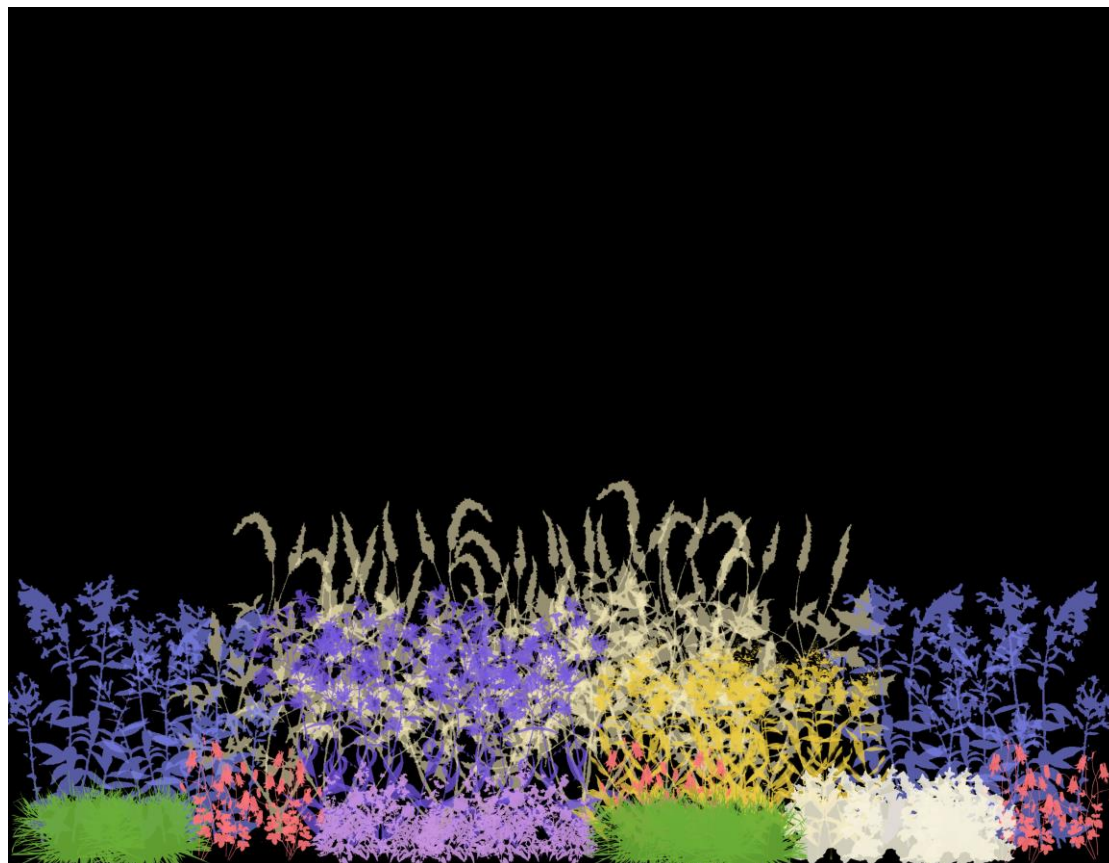
# 7 Native Gardens



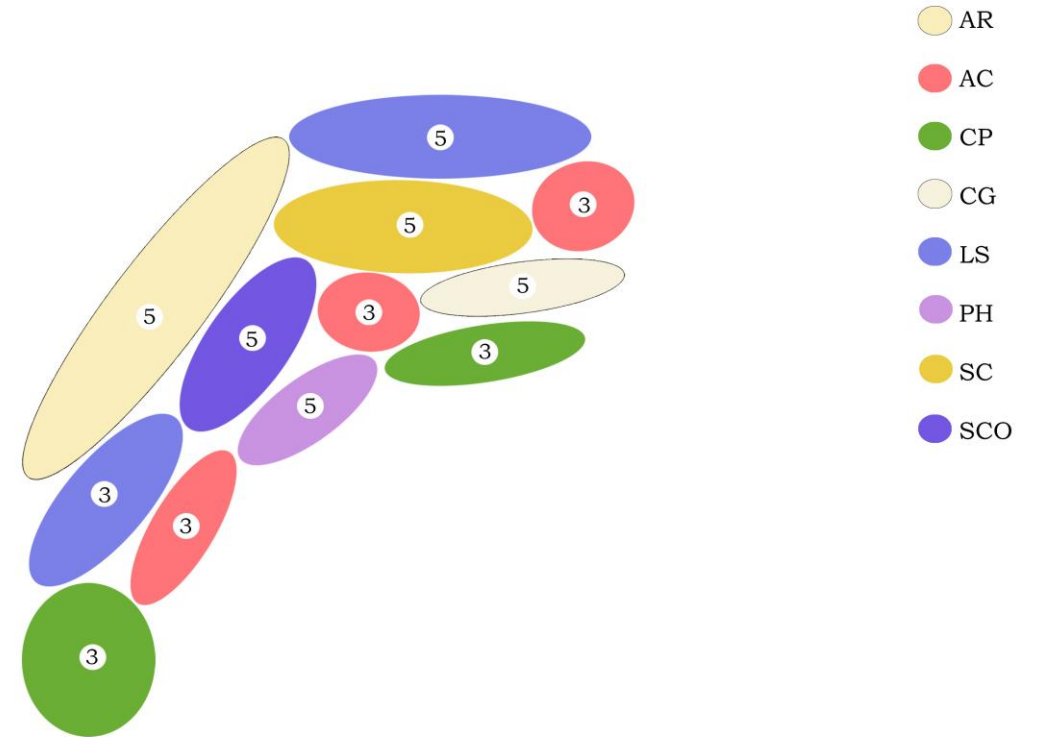




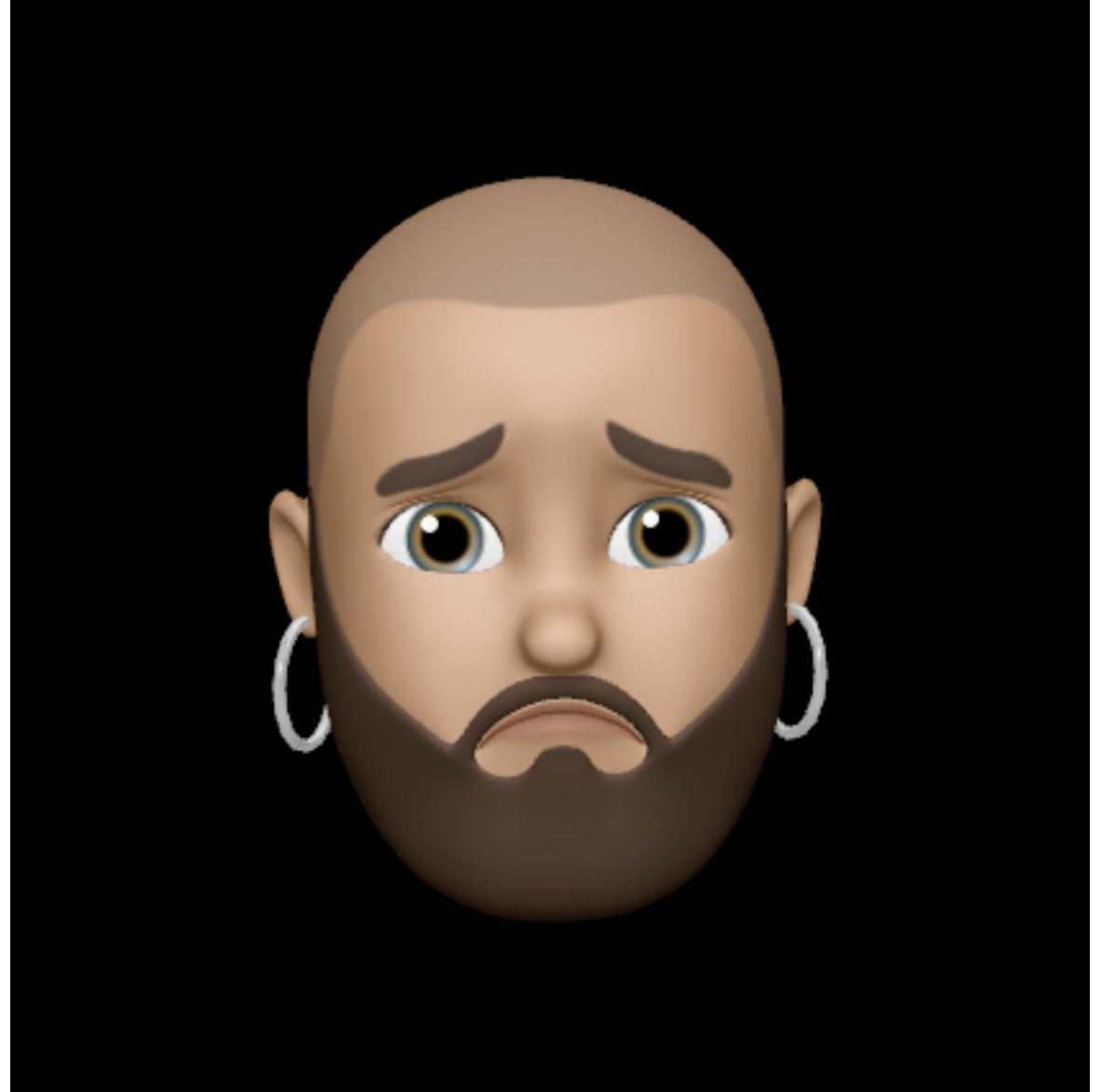
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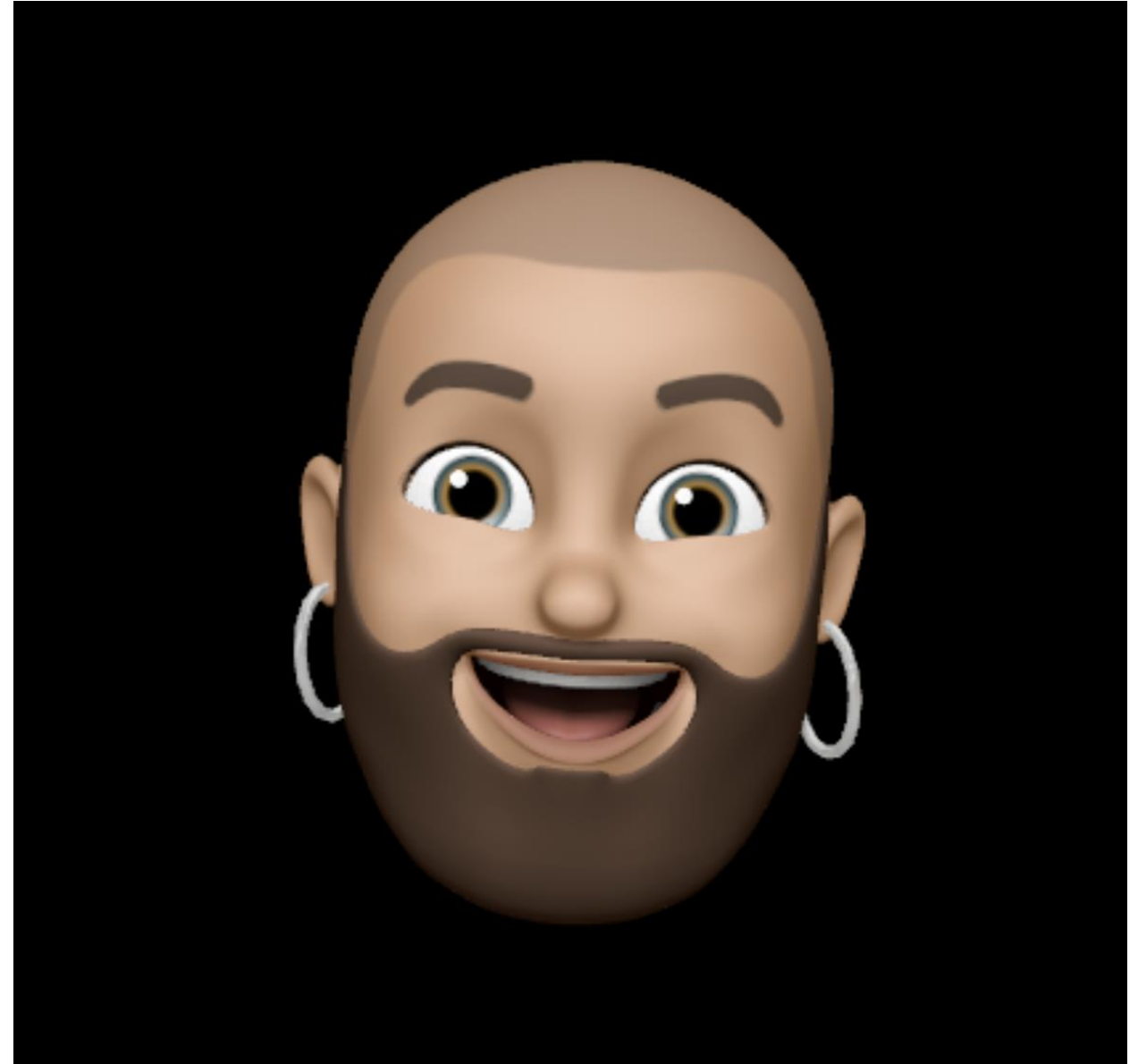


# There Is NO Shame In Liking Exotics





# There Is NO Shame In Liking Exotics



70/30





# Thank You





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