

THE NATIVE PLANTS OF PRAIRIEWALK POND



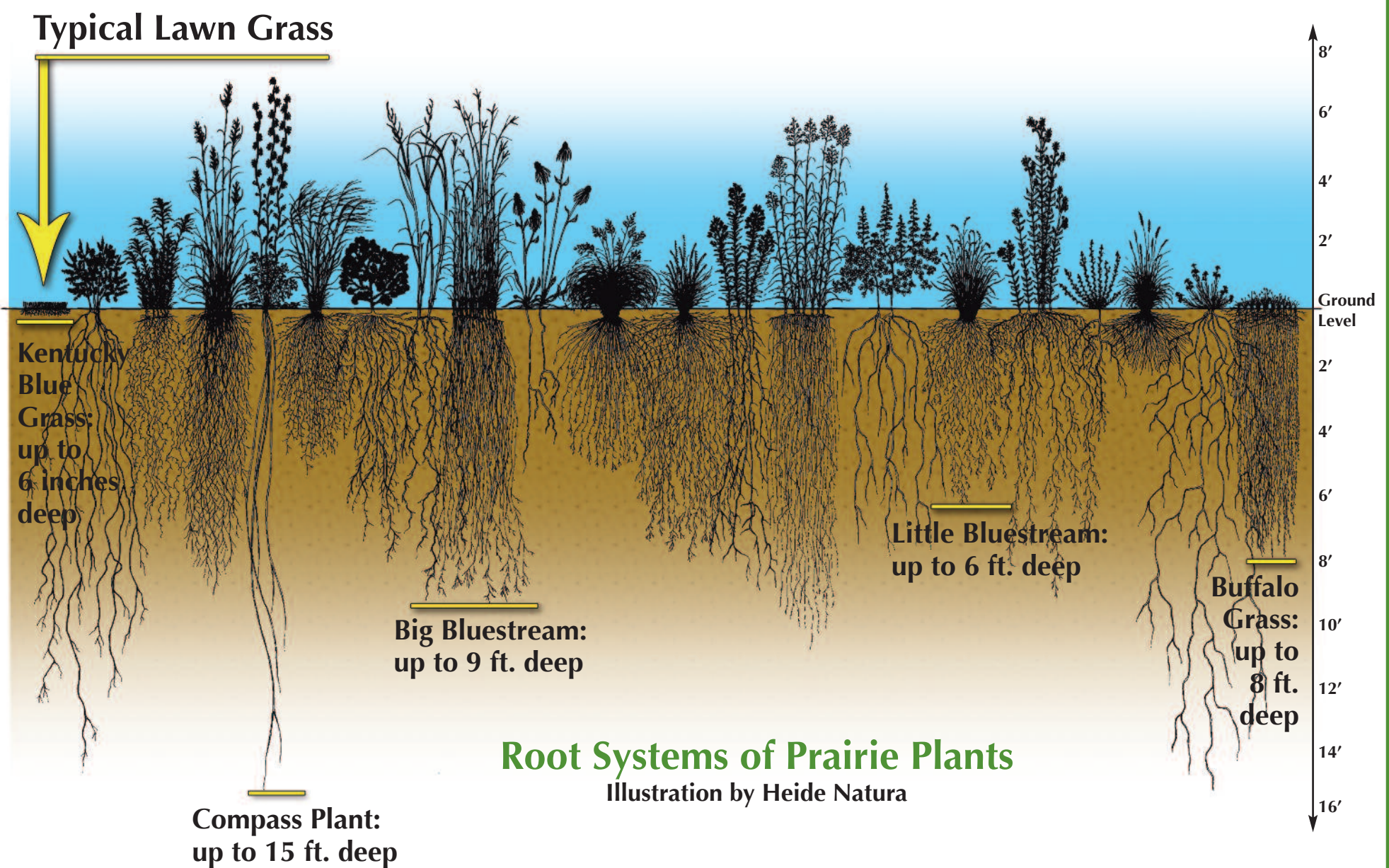
Twelve Spotted Skimmer Dragonfly

Native Plants Have Deep Roots

While lawn grass roots are only a few inches long, native plant roots can grow down to 16 feet! Lisle's dense clay soils prevent water from soaking into the ground quickly, especially when covered with lawn grass. As a result, run off water enters storm sewers which transport it – untreated – to nearby rivers and streams. Even small amounts of pollution in stormwater can add up to big problems.

Native plants' deep roots help prevent this from occurring. They hold the soil in place and greatly improve its ability to absorb and filter water, removing pollutants before they enter our rivers and streams.

PrairieWalk Pond contains more than 100 different types of native plants, grasses, shrubs and trees. Different types of vegetation were used for the wetland, shoreline, grassy areas, basin slope and children's play area.



Native Plants are Kind to the Environment

During the dry summer months, native root systems reach deep into the ground to find water, making them more drought resistant than non-natives. **(Non-native lawns require regular watering, which accounts for 30% – 60% of urban fresh water use).**

Native plants require very little maintenance and do not need mowing. **(Using a lawn mower for one hour pollutes as much as driving 40 cars for one hour).**

Native plants do not need fertilizers or pesticides. They have evolved and adapted natural defenses to local conditions such as nutrient poor soil, harsh winters, disease and insects. **(U. S. lawns receive 67 million pounds of pesticides each year. Phosphorus from fertilizers runs off into lakes and streams, creating algae blooms which harm native plant life and can kill large numbers of fish).**

We all benefit by the reduction of non-native lawn grass and the increased use of native plants.



Observe the variety of colorful native plants used throughout PrairieWalk Pond.

Native Plant Areas - Grocery Stores for Wildlife

Native plants restore biodiversity – the number or variety of different species in an area. Different species of wildlife have different needs, eating different foods, living in different habitats and releasing their young in different places. Even relatively small diverse habitats such as PrairieWalk Pond support biodiversity.

This native plant area provides:

- Food for birds, bees and butterflies from seeds and nectar
- Food for frogs and dragonflies from insects
- Food for wading birds from insects and frogs
- Shallow wet spots for butterflies to safely drink water
- Hollow sticks for bees and wasps to live in
- Protected warm basking sites for turtles and other reptiles

How are native plant seeds spread – do they parachute on the wind, hitchhike on clothes or fur or explode like a cannonball?

Visit www.villageoflisle.org/discover to learn more.

