#PlantsDoThat

For Cities and Suburbs!

Urban gardens and landscape plantings improve livability by benefitting environmental and public health

Keep Cool in the City

Street trees in cities and suburbs can help reduce ambient temperatures in a neighborhood by as much as 5.5°F.[1]

Cleaner Water

Plants growing in a raingarden or bioswale reduce nutrient pollution into watersheds by as much as 13-15 pounds of pollutants, per year.[4]

Cleaner Air

Urban street trees help to lower air pollutants, such as ozone, in a city.[5]

Run-Off Reducers

Plants growing in raised beds in New York City help slow the flow of 12 million gallons of stormwater, annually.[2]

Bee Boosters

Densely populated cities can benefit bees, as long as neighborhoods in that city have lots of gardens and garden plants.[6]

Flood Fighters

Raingardens reduce stormwater surges, and prevent flooding, by retaining up to 75% of stormwater surge after a heavy rain event.[3]

Native Trees Sustain Native Birds

Native trees in residential yards help sustain native bird populations in metropolitan areas.[7]

This infographic was produced by the NICH Environmental Committee: Amy Jo Detweiler, Gail Langellotto, Carl Evensen, Allison Gault, Sarada Krishnan, Julie Weisenhorn, Sabrena Schweyer, Lauren Garcia Chance. Design provided by the Horticultural Research Institute.

[1]Wang et al. 2018. Cooling effect of urban trees on the built environment of the contiguous United States. Earth's Future 6: 1066-1081

[2]Gittleman et al. 2017. Estimating stormwater runoff for community gardens in New York City. Urban Ecosystems 20: 129-139.

[3]Shetty et al. 2019. Studying the effect of bioswales on nutrient pollution in urban combined sewer systems. Science of the Total Environment 665: 994-958.

[4]Shetty et al. 2019. Studying the effect of bioswales on nutrient pollution in urban combined sewer systems. Science of the Total Environment 665: 994-958.

[5]Samson et al. 2017. Urban trees and their relation to air pollution. In Pearlmutter, D. et al. (eds) The Urban Forest. Future City, vol. 7. Springer, Cham.

[6]Lowenstein et al. 2014. Humans, bees, and pollination services in the city: the case of Chicago, IL (USA). Biodiversity and Conservation 23: 2857-2874.

[7]Narango et al. 2018. Nonnative plants reduce population growth of an insectivorous bird. PNAS 115: 11549-11554.

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