

Responsible Buying

Why do sellers dig Native Plants?

- woodland and bog plants like lady slipper orchids, trilliums, Jack-in-the-pulpit, Dutchman's breeches, and pitcher plants are very difficult to grow from seed
- prairie and meadow plants like purple cone flower and woodland plants like ginseng are sought by pharmaceutical companies
- it is less costly than propagation



What is wrong with digging?

- digging can wipe-out or drastically reduce entire populations of native plants
- the plants left represent a reduced gene-pool
- digging disrupts the habitat for other plants, damages roots, and increases erosion
- it is illegal to dig on public lands
- it is illegal to dig on private lands without permission
- some plants are dependent on other plants, fungi, or special soil conditions for survival
- plants dug when they are blooming are very vulnerable

How do diggers damage these plants?

- they dig during the blooming period—the worst time in a plant's annual cycle
- they refrigerate or store in holding pits until they are sold
- they are transported from the digging site bare root

All result in poor survival and decimation of a population.

When can digging be okay?

- to rescue plants from impending development
- when a person is managing their own property and treating plants as a renewable resource

How can I be sure the plants I buy come from reputable sources?

- learn about native plant propagation
- ask questions, like
 - ✓ How do you get your plants?
 - ✓ How are the plants shipped?
 - ✓ Where do you get our plants?
 - ✓ How much are your plants?
- nursery propagated plants are usually more expensive
- dug plants are relatively inexpensive
- if the seller can't or won't answer your questions—find another source

To Read More About Native Plants

Sources of Propagated Native Plants and Wildflowers (list), New England Wild Flower Society, Garden in the Woods, 180 Hemenway Road, Framingham, MA 01701.

Midwest Region Native Seed and Plant Resource List, National Wildflower Research Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave., Austin, TX 78739-1702.

Gardening by Mail, Barbara Butler, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994.



For native plant suppliers check the **Grow Native!** website at:
<http://www.grownative.org>

About the Missouri Native Plant Society

MoNPS is devoted to the conservation and study of plants growing wild in Missouri, to the education of the public about the significance of the native flora and its habitat, and to the publication of related information. MoNPS was founded in 1979.

Our chapters are:

Hawthorn (Columbia)
Kansas City
Osage Plains (Clinton)
Ozark (West Plains)
St. Louis

For more information on MoNPS, becoming a member, and a chapter in your area, write to:

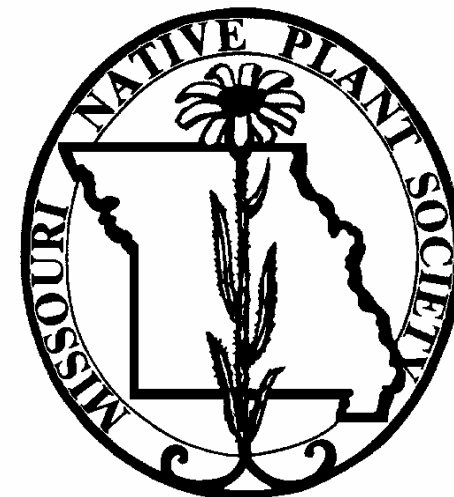
Missouri Native Plant Society
PO Box 20073
St. Louis, MO 63144-0073

or check our website at:
http://www.missouri.edu/~umo_herb/monps

This is one in a series of information brochures on native plants in Missouri. Check our website for new brochures as they become available.

Responsible Buying of Native Plants

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Missouri Native Plant Society