Key Species of Monkton

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From dark swamps to rocky ridgetops and from wildflower fields to beaver ponds, Monkton, Vermont, is home to a wide variety of natural habitats and species. This guide shares the woody and herbaceous plant species that you're likely to find in Monkton. Many of these species provide helpful clues about the landscape.

Monkton can be split into three major elevation classes that are home to similar patterns of trees, plants, and soils. Some of these species may occur in similar *or different* contexts in other places in Vermont, but this text is meant to explain the where these species occur in Monkton.

Rich areas are high in nutrients such as calcium, magnesium, and other nutrients that plants need to thrive. Rich soils tend to be alkaline, rather than acidic, and often have soil parent material of clay, silt, or calcareous bedrock.

Poor areas have conditions at the other end of the nutrient spectrum. Their soils lack high nutrient content and they tend to be more acidic thanks to acidic bedrock or organic material. Soil parent material for these soils might be soils with high organic matter content or sand.

Upland

Upland areas include elevations above 600 feet in both Hogback ranges, including ridges, outcrops, and high forests. These areas might have extensive exposed bedrock and dry, rocky, nutrient poor soils--but they can also have deep pockets of soil rich in nutrients.

A Dry Oak Woodland community on a low ridgetop

A high elevation forest

The view west from the ridge of the Big Hogback range

Transition

These steep areas are found in the middle of slopes on the Big Hogback and Little Hogback ranges between 500 and 600 feet of elevation. They tend to have sandy or gravelly soils that can be deep, and oftentimes cliffs or talus slopes dominate these environments. Nutrient content of the soil varies, with some areas richer than the surrounding environment.

A Cheshire Quartzite cliff on the slope of the Big Hogbacks

A Hemlock Forest on a north-facing slope

An open talus slope on the Big Hogbacks

Lowlands

Below 500 feet in elevation, soils change drastically, becoming deeper and more poorly-drained. Nutrient-rich silts and clays line the bottom of the Pond Brook Valley, contributing to impressive soil fertility. Wetlands and swamps can be found in depressions, and gently rolling, wet meadows are common.

An Alluvial Shrub Swamp on Pond Brook

A Northern White Cedar Swamp

A wet meadow adjacent to a beaver pond

Trees

The distribution of tree species depends on a variety of factors. Individual tree species prefer specific topographical positions, soil conditions, sun exposure, and water and nutrient content. Many trees in Monkton are relatively young trees due to "The Great Cutover," in the 19th and early 20th century, a time in Vermont when almost 80% of Vermont's forests were cleared.

A small cedar tree regenerates on a large stump of cedar that was likely cut for timber

The lacy fronds of a dense cedar forest

Northern white cedar
Thuja occidentalis
Lowlands, Rich Transition areas

Northern white cedar are long-lived trees that prefer a variety of habitats. They thrive in wetlands, rocky calcareous areas, and places where nutrients are high. They are dependent on moisture conditions and can vegetatively reproduce, which means they can grow without new seeds, sprouting new branches and trees from existing branches. Northern white cedar prefer consistent moisture rather than frequent flooding, and are an important food source for deer and snowshoe hare. The wetlands of Monkton are often populated by cedar, thanks to stable water conditions and a strong calcium influence from the bedrock below. Cedar were popular with early European settlers for fence posts, and many areas have been cut over quite recently for the rot resistant wood of cedar.

Black ash leaves

Corky black ash bark

Black ash
Fraxus nigra
Lowlands, Frequently flooded areas

Black ash have corky, spongy bark and compound leaves like other ash trees. They are always found in conditions with abundant water--wetlands, seeps, and areas that flood. They can even tolerate extreme flooding conditions. They are a slow growing tree that prefers abundant sunlight, and they'll do just fine in both acidic and calcareous habitats. They were never commercially important to European settlers, but their bark is heavily used for basket weaving by indigenous populations. Black ash is found in many wetlands, swamps, and seeps in Monkton.

Chestnut oak leaves

The dramatic bark of a chesnut oak

Chestnut oak
Quercus montana
Uplands

Chestnut oak is almost at the northern end of its range in Monkton, and is only found in the Champlain Valley in Vermont. It can be easy to identify by its massive, platy bark. Chestnut oak bark is more distinct than that of any other tree in Monkton. It thrives on infertile soils and dry, rocky ridges with southern exposure. This species is occassionally used for lumber in some places, but not frequently in Monkton because trees here tend to be stunted or gnarled from nutrient deprivation. It is traditionally known as a southern species, and is more abundant in other states on the eastern seaboard. Wildlife enjoy acorn crops from this slow growing tree.

Red oak leaves

Red oak bark

Red oak
Quercus rubra
Transition, Upland, Lowland

Red oak is the most common oak tree within the Pond Brook Watershed, and you'll often find it on well-drained soils, or shallow soil areas with bedrock close to the surface. It also will thrive on rich clay soils that are not excessively wet. Red oak is a moderate to fast growing tree that can be found on lower, concave slopes and upland areas in Monkton. The acorns from this species are a great food source for squirrel, deer, turkey, mice, voles, and other species. It can tolerate a multitude of light conditions, and is an important lumber species for a variety of products.

Typical white oak bark

The round leaf tips of white oak

Old-growth white oak tree in Monkton

White oak
Quercus alba
Transition, Upland

White oak leaves have one obvious difference from red oak leaves- the tips are rounded. White oak prefers slightly richer habitat than red oak, and grows well on many soils. It is found on hilltops and ridge tops in Monkton, and in drier Clayplain communities that are exceedingly rare in Monkton. Like other oak species, It is rarely found in wetlands. It grows slower than red oak, but is often found in similar habitat. It is an important lumber species.

The short needles of a hemlock tree

A hemlock forest

Eastern hemlock
Tsuga canadensis
Transition, Upland, Lowland

Eastern hemlock is extremely tolerant of shade and can be found in ravines, cool moist soils, and on slopes. Its bark was used extensively in the nineteenth century for tanning, and as a result, it was cut out of much of its preferred habitat. Given the chance, hemlock will colonize rich, lowland soils, but in Monkton it's easier to find hemlock on sandy upland slopes that are shallow to bedrock. Hemlock is important for the paper and pulp industries, and large stands of hemlock are used as deer wintering areas. It is a slow-growing, long-lived tree.

The leaves of a shagbark hickory

The distinct bark of a shagbark hickory

Shagbark hickory
Carya ovata
Lowland, Transition

This distinct tree has long strips of vertical bark that peel off of its trunk. Shagbark hickory prefers rich and somewhat dry habitat, and the bark is used as nesting habitat by the endangered Indiana bat and other bat species. In Monkton, shagbark hickory can be found on rich rocky hillsides, often alongside oak species. Hickory is very popular as a fuelwood, and historically many residents of Monkton have selectively cut Hickory for fuel and to harness its remarkable building strength. Shagbark hickory nuts are an important wildlife food source.

The asymmetrical base of an elm leaf

The diagonal ridges of an elm tree

American elm
Ulmus americanus
Lowlands, Transition

American elm trees were once much more plentiful, but today fully grown trees are rare thanks to a pathogen known as Dutch Elm Disease. These picturesque trees have thin, diagonally ridged bark and long drooping branches covered in assymetrical leaves. Elm trees prefer areas enriched by water but that are not poorly-drained, floodplains, and streambanks. Occassinally elm are found in higher transition areas where nutrients have accumulated or bedrock has enriched the soil.

The thin, pointed, compound leaves of bitternut hickory

The intricately carved bark of a bitternut hickory

Bitternut hickory
Carya cordiformis
Transition, Uplands

Bitternut hickory has thin, compound leaves and occurs in moist, deciduous forests at mid-elevations in Monkton. The bark is silvery gray bark with shallow, interlacing wrinkles. Unlike shagbark hickory, it does not peel off in large strips. Some wildlife use the nut this species as food, and bitternut are shade intolerant. The wood from bitternut hickory is highly shock resistant, and a good fuel wood.

Sugar maple leaf

A large sugar maple tree with sugaring tube

Sugar maple
Acer sacharrum
Transition, Uplands

Sugar maple trees prefer moist, rocky, and somewhat rich transition areas in Monkton. Part of the long and storied history of tapping for maple sugar in Vermont, this species prefers slightly well-drained soils and can tolerate a vast range of pH conditions. Bark is slightly fissured and becomes more dramatically so as the tree ages. One surefire way to tell sugar maple from red maple is the notches between leaf-lobes. Sugar maple have U-shaped lobes, while those of red maple are V-shaped.

The gently curved edges of a beech leaf

The smooth gray bark of a beech tree

American beech
Fagus grandifolia
Transition, Uplands

Beech is shade tolerant and very common in Northern Hardwood Forest communities in Monkton. The bark is light gray and smooth even on older trees, unless the tree is affected by Beech Bark disease, a pathogen threatening beech populations all over New England. Trees suffering from Beech Bark disease are pockmarked and scarred. Beech nuts are an important food source for black bear and in mature beech groves there are often bear scratches or claw marks up the side of beech trees. Beech leaves remain on the tree long after other deciduous trees have shed their leaves, and pale orange in the fall. This makes beech trees easiest to identify in the autumn.

The thinly serrated leaves of yellow birch.

A large yellow birch tree on the western slope of the Big Hogback.

Yellow birch
Betula alleghaniensis
Transition

Yellow birch has golden-bronze bark that peels off in small strips, making it one of the most easly recognized birch species. The inner bark smells curiously of wintergreen, and it is a slow-growing, long-lived tree. Yellow birch is found with other hardwoods and eastern hemlock on moist, well-drained soils, rocky transition areas, and shaded ravines. It is a dependable browse plant for white-tailed deer and moose whileother wildlife feed on the tree buds and seeds.

Swamp white oak leaves

T*he deeply ridged bark of swamp white oak*

Swamp white oak
Quercus bicolor
Lowlands

While swamp white oak leaves have a large amount of variation and sometimes look similar to chestnut oak, the two species will never share the same habitat in Vermont. Swamp white oak prefers wet, rich, or clay soils and can be found in areas that flood or drain poorly in Monkton. Its distinct ridged leaves taper into a narrow bottom, and it has deep, flattened, and thin ridges of bark. Swamp white oak are majestic trees, and in Monkton, they oftentimes tower over the canopy. The strong wood is considered valuable for lumber, but there are not many left in Monkton.

Herbaceous Plants and Shrubs

Winterberry holly
Ilex verticellata
Lowlands, transition

The tiny white flowers on this shrub eventually turn into shiny red berries that are a critical food source for birds in the winter. They prefer forested wetlands, and can grow very large, almost into the size of a tree. -mention one in swamp

Equisetium arvense

Horsetails and Scouring Rushes
Lowlands, transition

These odd looking plants resemble lego toys with hollow stems and distinct jointed areas. They have silica inside their plant tissues, and they were tradtiionally used as an abrasive to scour pans or polish metal.

Cypripedium reginae; showy lady's slipper, prefers rich wetlands

Malaxis monophyllos, a rare orchid in Monkton

Early coralroot, Corallorhiza trifida, can be found in rich forested swamps

Orchids
Lowlands

Monkton is a host to a variety of stunning orchids, some of which are rare. Orchids are partial to cool and nutrient rich environments, like swamps. Orchids, like lillies, often have leaves with long, parallel veins on them, and oftentimes these leaves are basal, or only at the bottom of the plant. Since many orchids are rare, it's important to know what species grow on your property.

Carex intumescens signifies wet soils

Common spikerush , or Eleocaris palustris, prefers shallow water

Sedges
Lowlands, Transition, Uplands

These unassuming plants can be difficult to identify, but they tell us a lot about the places we find them. Although they resemble grasses, there is one key difference to count on--sedges have triangle-shaped stems, and lack the jointed stems of grasses. Different sedge species indicate wet habitat, rich environments, or even dry, poor nutrient rich sites.

Carex leptalea prefers rich swamps

Carex radiata, or star sedge prefers hardwood seepages

Cinnamon fern
Osmunda cinnamomea
Lowlands

Cinnamon fern is another wetland fern with a distinct cinnamon colored fertile frond that rises up from the center of the plant in the fall. Cinnamon fern is common in forested wetlands.

Christmas fern
Polystichum achrostichoides
Transitions, uplands

This evergreen fern is dark and shiny, and prefers somewhat acidic wood environments.

Small fronds of rock polypody, Polypodium virginianum

Rock polypody
Polypodium virginanum
Transition, Upland

These smaller ferns often make their home growing out of bedrock, both calcareous and acidic. They oftentimes are found in abundance on rocky outcrops and talus slopes.

Bracken fern
Pteridium aquilinum
Transition, upland

This three-leaved fern indicates, poor, well-drained, sandy, and oftentimes acidic soils.

Maidenhair
Adiantum pedatum
Transition

Maidenhair is a lacy, circular fern with a wiry black stem that prefers rich habitat. It can be found in places where the bedrock is rich in calcium, or colluvial pockets where nutrients have flown into small depressions in the landscape and enriched the soil.

Royal fern
Osmunda regalis
Lowlands

This fern looks markedly different than other ferns of Monkton, with less lacy fronds. Royal fern prefers wetlands and is a great indicator species for a wet habitat. It can be found in rich cedar swamps and poorer wetlands.

Marginal fern
Dropteris marginalis
Transition, Uplands

This evergreen fern enjoys rich areas, often influenced by limestone and can be identified by the location of it's sori on the underside.

Beech fern
Phegopteris connectilis
Transition

This fern is instantly recognizable thanks to bottom fronds that look like a mustache, beech fern prefers rocky, cold, and somewhat moist areas in Monkton, like outcrops at the bottom of a slope.

Bublet fern
Cystopteris bulbifera
Lowland, Transition

This spindly fern has thin fronds with lots of space between the leaves. It's found in rocky areas on cliffs or ledges and occassionally swamps.

Asplenium trichomanes ssp. quadrivalens, prefers calcareous rock

Maidenhair spleenwort
Asplenium trichomanes, ssp. quadrivalens,
Transition, Uplands

Spleenworts are small, delicate ferns that appear to grow directly out of rock. Different species indicate calcareous or acidic rock.

Marsh fern
Thelypteris palustris
Lowlands

This pale green fern with a reddish stem is found in very wet places.

Sensitive fern
Onoclea sensibilis
Lowlands, Transition

Sensitive fern is also a fern that likes wet places, but even the slightest seep or ditch can encourage it to grow. It has more rounded fronds that are more merged together than other ferns in this guide.

Starflower
Lysmachia borealis
Lowlands

Starflower gets its name from its delicate white star-shaped flowers. It prfers cool, moist, rich habitats, and is one of the few flowers that typically has seven petals.

Wood sorrell
Oxalis montana
Lowlands, uplands

This brightly colored flower has clover-like leaves, and sticks out in dark forests thanks to its bright colors. It prefers cold, moist habitats, like swamps and forests.

Barren strawberry
Geum fragarioides.
Lowlands

These unassuming, low herbs indicate very rich silt or clay soils. Barren strawberry has small yellow flowers and wedge-shaped leaves.

Giant bur-reed
Sparganium eupycarpum
Lowlands

The blooms on this plant resemble massive spiky cotton bolls, and it prefers wetlands and flooded areas, or stream margins. Eventuallly these blooms become solid green spheres.

Potentilla recta, or sulphur cinquefoil

Cinquefoil species
Lowlands

A variety of these five-petaled and bright yellow flowers can be found in disturbed habitats.

Jewelweed
Impatiens capensis
Upland, lowland, transiton

Landscape position doesn't matter very much to jewelweed, which depends on moist conditions to survive. It's found in seepage areas and wetlands. The flowers are a spotted orange color.

Arrowleaf
Peltandra virginica
Lowlands, Beaver Ponds

This rare, aquatic plant is found in marshes and slightly deeper water. The fruits and seeds are eaten by waterfowl and migratory birds.

Vaccinium angustifolium, lowbush blueberry

Blueberry species
Transition, Uplands

There are multiple blueberry species in Monkton, and most of them prefer acidic, poor soils within ridgetop environments or wetlands. The berries are popular with bears and birds, and the leaves are pointed and have something of a leathery texture.

Cow vetch
Vicia cracca
Lowlands

This stunning purple flower is common in drainages, edges of fields, and other distrubed areas.

Beech drops, Epifagus virginiana, uses the roots of American beech trees to get nutrients

Parasitic Species
Transition, Upland

While "parasitic" may sound like a bad thing, in this case, it's just the natural way these native plants get their nutrients-- from the roots of other trees. In most cases, these parasitic plants don't need sunlight because they don't photosynthesize like other plants. They are often found in shaded, nutrient-poor environments like hemlock forests.

Hobblebush
Viburnum lantanoides
Transition, uplands

The big flat leaves of hobblebush bear bushels of beautiful white flowers in the spring and are smong the first leaves to turn deep red in the fall. They prefer nutrient poor forest floors. Be careful where you step around Hobblebush-- it's very easy to trip over!

Huckleberry
Gaylussacia bacatta
Lowlands, Uplands

These woody shrubs are in the same family as blueberries and share the characteristic of tough, leathery leaves. The leaves on huckleberry, however, are more rounded at the tip. Huckleberry prefers poor soils, and acidic ridges. The berries are edible, but make sure they're huckleberries before you take a bite!

Bluebead lily
Clintonia borealis
Lowlands

This yellow lily prefers cool habitats, and in Monkton, can be found in forested swamps. Its name is derived from the round blue fruit that the flower eventually becomes..

Purple-flowering saspberry
Rubus odoratus
Transition

These magenta-flowered shrubs colonize disturbed areas, and can be found in areas recently harvested for timber and rocky woodlands.

Bunchberry
Cornus canadensis
Lowlands

The white flowers on the green rosettes of bunchberry eventually matureinto bright red berries. In Monkton, bunchberry is plentiful in cool forests and swamps.

Partridgeberry
Mitchella repens
All habitats

Partridgeberry is a plant you'll find where many other species can't grow. Its small green leaves creep across nutrient poor forest floors and areas dominated by coniferous trees. It has a small red fruit eaten by partridges, or ruffed grouse, as well as wild turkey, mice, foxes, skunks and deer.

Doll's Eyes
Achtaea pachypoda
Transition, upland

Doll's eyes have bushy white flowers which turn to berries. The berries look uncannily like many sets of eyes peering out into the woods. This plant prefers rich forests, and can usually be found on little benches within slopes where nutrients have washed down.

Helianthus decapetalus prefers seep areas

Sunflowers
Lowlands, Uplands, Transition

Many different sunflower species inhabit Monkton, and some of them are exceedingly rare. It can be difficult to tell them apart, but a hint that you've found a sunflower is bright yellow petals and tiny compound petals in the center of the flower.

Cattails
Typha latifolia
Lowlands, Beaver Ponds

This species may look dull, but it provides important habitat for birds and aquatic species. It can be found in many different kinds of wetlands.

Wild Ginger
Asarum canadense
Transition

Wild ginger may sound tasty, but it's a separate species from the ginger you can find in stores. It's a rich-soil loving species, and if you find it, it's likely that it's growing over calcium-rich bedrock. It has tiny red flowers in the springtime.

Pitcher Plants
Saraccenia purpurea
Lowlands

Pitcher plants are one of the only carnivorous plants found in New England. They prefer wetland environments that have accidic mounds called hummocks raised above the surface. In Monkton, they're easier to see if you have a canoe.

Common Yarrow
Lowlands
Achillea millefolium

These vivid pink flowers have thin, fern-like leaves and grow in disturbed areas. Most of the yarrow growing in Vermont is white.

Tall Larkspur
Delphinium exaltatum
Lowlands

These large plants bear brilliant blue flowers and grow in disturbed meadows and thickets. If you find tall larkspur, it's possible that it escaped from cultivation.

Tall rattlesnake root
Nabalus Altissimus
Transition

Rattlesnake root has white flowers that resemble hanging lampshades and is found in rocky, nutrient poor forests. It was traditionally used by indigenous tribes to treat rattlesnake wounds.

Cardinal flower
Lobelia cardinalis
Transition

This unmistakable bright red flower enjoys moist areas and rich woods. Hummingbirds in particular enjoy the pollen of cardinal flowers.

Bishop's Cap
Mitella diphylla
Lowlands, Transition

Named for the way the tiny black fruit of this plant resembles a bishop's cap, this species bears delicate white flowers. They prefer rich rocky outcrops or rich swamps.

Witch hazel
Hamamelis virginiana
Uplands, Transitions

One of the only flowers that blooms in November, you can find witch hazel and its irregular yellow flowers in on extremely well-drained coarse soils. The leaves resembles oddly-shaped spatulas. Witch hazel is found in dry oak forests and growing on poor soils.

Twinflower
Linnaeus borrealis
Lowlands

These identical pink flowers love cool, rich, and forested swamps in Monkton.

Bottlebrush grass, Elymus hystrix, prefers dry woodland areas

Wood millet, or Milium effusum, prefers damp woods and seepage areas.

Grasses
Poaceae
Uplands, Lowlands, Transition

Grasses are similar to sedges in that they can be a very helpful indicator of environment, but they are-- if anything--even more difficult to identify. They often have jointed stems and thrive in a variety of environments.

Jack-in-the-pulpit
Arisaema triphyllum
Transition, uplands

The root of this peculiar looking flower is a popular snack for black bears. The flower itself resembles a small hooded tent, and in the fall, a bright tower of red berries takes its place.

Arrow leaved tearthumb
Persicaria sagittata
Lowlands

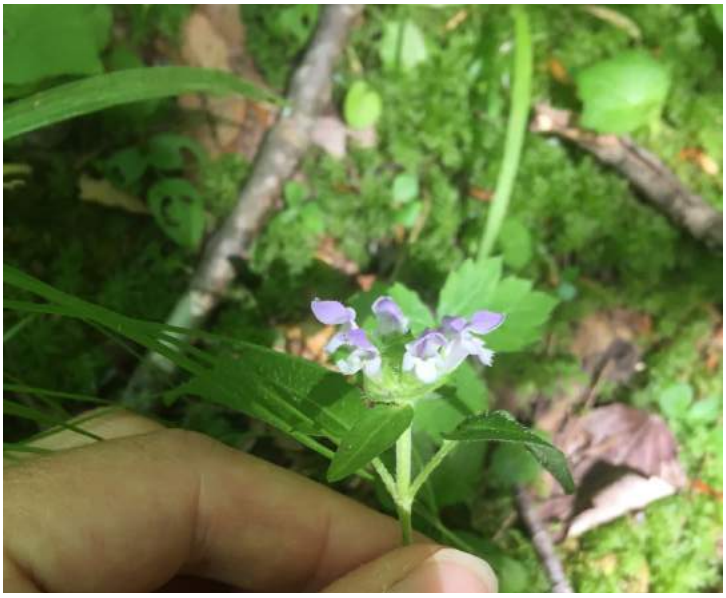
Arrow-leaved tearthumb often grows in clusters. It lives up to its painful namesake because of the tiny thorns that cover the stem. It prefers wetlands and seepage areas, and when in fruit has round pink and white berries.

False solomon's-seal
Maianthemum racemosum
Transition, Uplands

This species prefers hardwood and acidic forest floors, and has a single stem with a trailing terminal cluster of red or white fruit at the end. It was widely used by Native Americans for medicine. The ripe fruit are edible, but be sure it's false solomon's seal before you try them out!

Harebell
Campanula rotundifolia
Uplands

Also known as scotch bellflower, Harebell has beautiful purple flowers shaped like bells. It prefers cliffs and ledges on acidic bedrock in Monkton. The roots of this plant were used as a remedy by Native Americans for everything from ear pain to heart problems.



Selfheal
Prunella vulgaris
Transition, Uplands

Selfheal is a low-growing member of the mint family. It has distinctive 'puckered' leaves that surround layered crowns of purple flowers. It is a non-native species, and common in meadows and on trails.

Climbing nightshade
Solanum dulcamara
Lowlands

Climbing nightshade is an invasive vine that colonizes areas near wetlands, forest edges, and disturbed habitats. It is toxic and can have bright yellow or deep purple flowers.

Ramps
Allium tricoccum
Lowlands, Transition

Ramps, or wild leeks, are found in rich, moist forests, often over Dunham Dolomite or on floodplains. They are significantly over-harvested in New England, and they have long, grass-like stems with heads covered in closed white bulb-like flowers.

Sharp-lobed hepatica

Hepatica acutiloba
Transition

Sharp-lobed hepatica is one of the earliest spring flowers and can be light pink or purple. This flower takes advantage of the sunlight hitting the forest floor before leaves appear on trees. Hepatica's distinctive leaves have 3 pointed lobes. It prefers rich sites in Monkton, especially those on Dunham Dolomite bedrock

Striped maple
Acer pensylvanicum
Transition, Lowlands

Striped maple has greenish-brown bark marked by white stripes and leaves that resemble maple leaves but are much broader and more textured. This species tends to have a smaller growth form than full-sized trees and it inhabits cool woods. Striped maple is very shade-tolerant and provides browse for porcupine, beaver, deer, cottontail rabbit, and moose.

Common blackberry
Rubus allegheniensis
Transitions, Lowlands

Blackberry is a shrub covered in sharp thorns that enjoys recently disturbed areas and forests. It often develops in large thickets. Birds, small mammals and bear in particular in enjoy eating these berries come late summer. The berries are dark purple-black and are also edible for humans, but as always, make sure you have a plant properly identified before you try it.

American lop-seed
Phryma leptostachya
Transition

This tiny-pink flowered plant was once used to treat sore throat, and antimicrobial compounds have been isolated from American lop-seed. It can be found in seepy, shaded areas, often at the bottom of rocky talus forests.

The buds of common milkweed

Common milkweed in bloom

Common milkweed
Asclepias syriaca
Lowlands

A variety of milkweed species can be found throughout Monkton, made distinguishable by large clusters composed of many smaller flowers and long, arrow shaped leaves. Common milkweed can be found in meadows, disturbed sites, and around the edges of marshes and beaver ponds. Milkweed is the only species that monarch butterflies use as a caterpillar host plant. Without milkweed, these beautiful butterflies cannot successfully reproduce, so it's important to allow milkweed to thrive if you find it on your property!

Ground cedar
Diphasiastrum digitatum
Transtion, upland

Ground cedar is just one of the club moss species that are found in forests throughout Monkton. Club mosses generally grow close to the ground and resemble tiny evergreen trees. Ground cedar has fan-like branches and similar to ferns, reproduces using spores rather than flowers.

Hog peanut
Amphicarpaea bracteata
All land types

This pale green vine has fine tendrils and a delicate row of purple flowers. It derives its names from edible seeds that were widely used by Native Americans. Hog peanut prefers moist, deciduous woodlands and thickets.

Blue cohosh
Caulophyllum thalictroides
Transition, Uplands

Blue cohosh prefers rich or colluvial areas in deciduous forests, and had bright blue berries when in fruit. These berries are framed by many sets of three spork-shaped leaves on long stems. The roots were used by Native Americans to treat a variety of ailments.

Spreading dogbane
Apocynum androsaemifolium
Lowlands

Dogbane is a shrub with white-pink flowers that resemble small roses hanging upside down. It prefers sunny areas on the edges of beaver ponds in Monkton. Fibers from the stems were traditionally used to make bow strings by Native Americans.

Wild sarsparilla
Aralia nudicaulis
Transition

Wild sarsparilla is found in rocky, shaded hardwood areas in Monkton. Each plant has three stalks of five serrated leaves, and in the center a globe of white flowers eventually turns into clusters of dark blue berries.

Blue vervain
Verbena hastata
Lowlands

This tall and distinct meadow-loving flower is a good food source for pollinators and songbirds. It has a pointed crown of many purple-blue flowers, and enjoys rich or alluvial soils.