



Oklahoma Wildscapes

What to Expect and How to Maintain

There are many variables that can come into play when thinking about what to expect, such as if you are using live plants, plugs, or seeds; how your site was prepared, weather conditions, soil conditions, etc. I often hear the following adage: the first year they sleep, second year they creep, third year they leap. This is not always true, but as a general rule, if growing native plants from seeds, you can expect the following:

- **Year 1:** If your site was seeded in the fall, a cover crop may have been used. This is an annual plant that can improve soil quality and work as protection for your seeds as a green mulch and weed blocker. It will likely die off, but it can also be cut down in early spring. Keep an eye out for weeds such as Bermuda grass and Johnson grass to name a couple. Make sure you identify any plants prior to weeding. I often just try to keep annual weeds from flowering (if you have the time). If in a drought, you may need to water the area 2-3x/week the first few months after germination.
- **Year 2:** Leave your native plants up over winter! This provides habitat and food for wildlife. Many native bees will overwinter in woody stems and birds will use seeds as a food source. Cut your site in the early spring (March) to 8-10 inches and remove the thatch (top layer of plant material). Note that this does not apply to trees, shrubs, or woody perennials - please note any additional maintenance recommendations on your plant profiles.
- **Year 3 and beyond:** This is the time for your yard to shine! You will manage it the same as the previous year. Do not be surprised if certain plants decrease, while others come into their own, this is natural! You will find that plants will move to areas they like and certain species will thrive (while others do not) in your little ecosystem. Enjoy the beauty that nature has to offer and the wildlife that it brings.

***If live plants were used, please water them 2-3 times a week until established or during times of drought during their first year. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions or need help maintaining your landscape!**