

RATE MY LAND (RML) ASSESSMENT
URBANSCAPE BIODIVERSITY INDEX REPORTING FORM
Consult the instructions for each scoring metric on the following page

<u>Category</u>	<u>Score</u>
1a. Number of native plant species recorded in the yard (see instructions for yard definition) Multiply total species recorded by unique value (see instructions for value)	____/65
1b. Percentage of native species 0 – 20% = 1 pt. 21 – 40% = 2.5 pts. 41 – 60% = 5 pts. 61 – 80% = 7.5 pts. 81 – 95% = 9 pts. 96 – 100% = 10 pts.	____/10
2. Invasive species (those listed in a regional invasive species list) 0 species = 5 pts. 1 species = 4 pts 2 species = 3 pts 3 species = 2 pts 4 species = 1 pts 5+ species = 0 pts	____/5
3. Diverse structure= Native trees, shrubs, and forbs present (see instructions) 0 _____ 5 Just one _____ All three present and equally distributed	____/5
4. Amount of lawn (non-native grass) -2.5 _____ 2.5 100% _____ 50% _____ 0%	____/2.5
5. Presence of the best host species (harbor great amounts of insect diversity) oaks (<i>Quercus</i>) = 5 pts. willows (<i>Salix</i>) = 4 pts cherries/plums (<i>Prunus</i>) = 3 pts birches (<i>Betula</i>) = 2 pts poplars (<i>Populus</i>) = 1 pt. crabapple (<i>Malus</i>) = 1 pt blueberries (<i>Vaccinium</i>) = 1pt.. maples (<i>Acer</i>) = 0.5pt.	____/7.5
6. Special features of conservation Add one point for each activity below that has been implemented (can go over 5) Rain barrel, compost bin, butterfly garden, rain garden, solar power, wind power, second RML survey,	____/5
TOTAL SCORE	_____/100

Company Name:

Consultant signature:

Company contact—email: _____ Phone _____

Please return completed form with any accompanying information to:

Email: ratemyland@gmail.com OR Mail: Information Manager, Rate My Land, 1331 Atkins Rd., Petoskey, MI 49770

URBANSCAPE BIODIVERSITY INDEX REPORTING FORM INSTRUCTIONS

First, define the urbanscape – Measure the area of the “yard” by determining its extent. For multiple acre properties, define an area of around 3 acres or less. For urban or small parcels, consider the whole property as the “yard.” Exclude the footprint of any structures from the total area.

1a. Plant species richness assessment - *Number of native species recorded in yard and property*

- Keep a list of all the species encountered over the entire yard.
- Rate My Land will compare the values that come in for this score and develop an average for later versions, until then 65 native species will be considered a perfect score. **Give one point for each native species encountered (unique multiplier value is one).**

1b. Percentage of native species – Divide the total number of native species by the total number of species found on the property. *Include* landscaped plants and flower gardens! Only *exclude* the vegetable/fruit garden(s).

2. Assessing health by evaluating invasive species: The threat of invasive species jeopardizes the long term health of native plant communities and does not feed native insects, impacting the food chain. Not all non-native species should be considered invasive species, consult local or regional invasive species lists.

3. Assessing health by evaluating structural diversity: Forbs, shrubs, and trees all provide different foods and cover needed by animals. More vertical diversity also provides more habitat or space for animals to live.

- Points can fall anywhere in-between zero and five, feel free to use your professional judgment to give a score measuring structural diversity, 5 for great diversity.
- A property with a dominance of trees should receive more points than one dominated by forbs (less so if the native ecosystem of your area is grassland, still oak species would be an excellent complement).

4. Amount of lawn – Lawns are like deserts that don't provide animals with many resources for life. Measure the total amount of lawn and divide that area by the total defined yard area. Vegetable gardens count as “non-lawn” area and our part of the total yard area. Lawn that may be under trees (a park like setting) also should be considered “non-lawn”—only measure open lawn space. Up to 2.5 points can be subtracted or earned.

5. Biodiversity heroes – This metric awards points for plants documented to feed and house the greatest diversity of insects as reported by Dr. Doug Tallamy in his 2007 book, “Bringing Nature Home”. The plants are listed in order with the best host receiving 5 points. These must be native species of these genera (except for crabapples).

- Award for an occurrence, not for every occurrence (i.e. there are four oak trees=only give 5 pts)
- Can give more than 5 pts for having more than one “hero”. Up to **10 pts max.**

6. Special features of conservation – Give one point for the presence of any of the activities or items listed for this metric. Circle or list them. Other items not listed here can be submitted for approval. Make sure to write in the activity or item and describe it if necessary. Go ahead and give the point, RML will decide whether to award the point or not. (Maximum of 10 points for this section).

Total the score, sign, and return via email or mail.