



Nature curtains

The primary purpose of a nature curtain is to maintain the native habitat on all estate home sites, thereby keeping the site connected to the surrounding nature preserve. When native plants are used in landscaping, the home site functions as a “gap in the forest” where sunlight reaches the ground and the plants provide cover and food for wildlife.

A nature curtain is also used to screen the view so that the home does not dominate the landscape when viewed from outside the property. There should be a healthy tree canopy with a diverse understory of shrubs, seedlings, grasses and herbaceous plants. It should resemble the nature preserve and appear unmanaged.

Maintaining an effective nature curtain

The effectiveness of your nature curtain may have changed since you purchased your property. As the trees, shrubs and vines mature, they shade out the understory and open areas are created below the canopy. Nature curtains that no longer provide screening may require management to restore this function.

If you think your nature curtain may need some maintenance, discuss your thoughts with the Landscape Ecologist. Extensive planting or tree removal requires HRB approval.

The addition of plants to the nature curtain must take into consideration the plant composition of neighboring lots and adjacent nature preserve areas. New nature curtain plantings should blend with existing habitat along roadsides and property boundaries. It is best to do this work in late winter or early spring when plant recovery will be most rapid.

Always use a landscape contractor who has been certified by Spring Island for this kind of project. To learn more about the certification requirements, contact the Trust Landscape Ecologist.