



Nutrient fixing plants

Plants are some of the most important sources of soil nutrients. Plants can either fix nutrients into the soil, like legumes, or they can take nutrients from the sub-soil into the leaves and fruit, which then fall onto the ground and the nutrients, decompose into the topsoil. The natural farmer uses cycles of plants and animals to build soil nutrients, rather than expensive chemicals which destroy the soil biology. It is a good idea to use these plants in your garden.

Below is a table with some common examples of good garden plants that assist with nutrient cycling.

NITROGEN	
<p>Legumes fix nitrogen from the air through their roots into the soil</p>	
<p>Clover</p> <p>This occurs naturally on nutrient rich clay soils. Seed can be scattered in garden beds.</p>	
<p>Lucerne</p> <p>This is a long living legume. It is good feed for livestock and chickens</p>	

Some plants accumulate nitrogen in their leaves

Stinging nettle

This plant also accumulates silica, calcium, iron and potassium and is a great all round fertility enhancer

It grows wild in forests and wet areas and can be grown easily, but beware the sting!



PHOSPHORUS

Some plants accumulate phosphorus in their leaves.

Comfrey

Also accumulates Potassium, Calcium and Nitrogen in their leaves

This is a great plant for liquid manure

It is also an important medicinal herb is known as knit bone, clears chest ailments and skin conditions



Dock

This is generally a rather difficult weed, as it has long, strong roots and seeds prolifically. Keep in check.

It also accumulates Nitrogen and Potassium



POTASSIUM

Some plants accumulate potassium in their leaves.

Yarrow

This is a useful garden herb, used liberally in compost, for mulching and for inter-planting as it is not too competitive. It is a good ground cover around fruit trees.

It also accumulates Phosphorus



Although it is not usual for people to use these plants in their gardens, it is a good idea to try them out and introduce them. Seeds of the legumes are readily available at seed outlets and potted plants of yarrow and comfrey are available at most garden shops and nurseries.