

AMERICAN SENTRY LINDEN (GL)
(*Tilia americana*) 'McKSentry'
AMERICAN SENTRY®



RED MAPLE (GL)
(*Acer rubrum*)[®]



AMERICAN SYCAMORE (GL)
(*Platanus occidentalis*)[®]



ALLEGHENY SERVICEBERRY (GL)
(*Amelanchier laevis*)[?]

Landscape Alternatives

Many invasive woody plants were purposefully introduced to be grown in the landscape. This brochure provides alternatives to **invasive woody plants still found in trade** and to **invasive plants that are no longer sold but are still commonly found in urban and suburban neighborhoods**. Alternatives were selected based on the following criteria:

- **Shared ornamental features**
- **No evidence of spreading from cultivation**
- **Available from nurseries and garden centers**
- **Reasonably easy to grow in the region**

Download our app!

The **Midwest Invasive Plant Network** has a free mobile app full of information on invasive landscape plants to avoid, as well as suitable alternatives.



For more information on woody invasive plants and what to do about them, or to get an electronic copy of this brochure, visit the WIGL Collaborative at woodyinvasives.org

To learn more about the landscape alternatives described here, including full descriptions and growing requirements, we recommend the following references:

PRINT

Midwestern Native Shrubs and Trees: Gardening Alternatives to Nonnative Species: An Illustrated Guide
Charlotte Adelman and Bernard L. Schwartz. 2017.
Ohio University Press, Athens, OH.

The Tree Book
Michael A. Dirr and Keith S. Warren. 2019.
Timber Press, Portland, OR.

Essential Native Trees and Shrubs for the Eastern United States: The Guide to Creating a Sustainable Landscape
Tony Dove and Ginger Woolridge. 2018.
Charlesbridge, Watertown, MA.

ONLINE

The Morton Arboretum
mortonarb.org/plant-and-protect/trees-and-plants

Missouri Botanical Garden
missouribotanicalgarden.org/plantfinder/plantfindersearch.aspx



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LANDSCAPE ALTERNATIVES

FOR INVASIVE TREES, SHRUBS, AND VINES
OF THE GREAT LAKES REGION



Everybody loves a beautiful landscape

Woody plants are vital to landscape and garden design. In addition to their beauty, they provide **shade and privacy, hold soil in place, filter rainwater, and improve air quality.** Gardeners and designers often choose woody plants that are hardy, adaptable, and fast-growing. Some species are selected because their fruits are colorful in the garden during winter and attract songbirds. Unfortunately, the **same traits that make a plant desirable in the landscape can contribute to invasiveness** if they spread and grow in natural areas.

VERNAL WITCHHAZEL (NA)
(*Hamamelis vernalis*)⁸



AMERICAN BITTERSWEET (GL)
(*Celastrus scandens*)³

What are invasive plants?

Invasive plants are defined as species that are non-native and cause harm. Often, invasive plants harm the environment by establishing dense populations in natural areas, outcompeting native plants, and damaging wildlife habitat. There is also evidence that dense populations of certain woody invasive plants promote increased populations of tick species that carry human diseases.

Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) is an invasive species in most of North America.¹⁰ It remains widely available for purchase in most states despite being linked to increased tick populations.



Deer Tick
(*Ixodes scapularis*)¹¹

Why native plants?

The vast majority of plants that are not native to the Great Lakes region are not invasive. However, native plants **provide food and shelter that support a diversity of insects, birds, and other critters. They transform backyards into habitats!**

CATEGORIES OF LANDSCAPE ALTERNATIVES

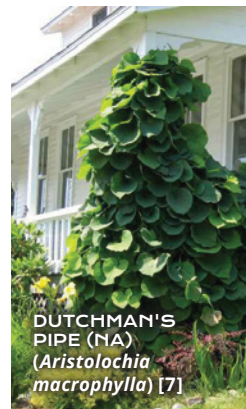
Great Lakes Native (GL) – A plant species that was **historically present in the Great Lakes Basin** prior to European colonization. Natural resource agencies and native plant societies are great resources to learn which plants are native to your location.

North American Native (NA) – A plant species that was **historically present in North America** but not within the Great Lakes Basin prior to European colonization. Species that evolved in regions south of the Great Lakes may be the most able to adapt to climate change.

Non-Native Plant (NN) – A plant species that was **brought to North America by humans and did not evolve here.** The vast majority of non-native plants are not invasive.



SUMMERSWEET (NA)
(*Clethra alnifolia*) [8]



DUTCHMAN'S
PIPE (NA)
(*Aristolochia
macrophylla*) [7]



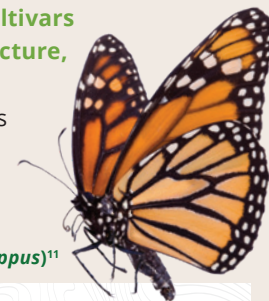
CULTIVARS
The fall color of hybrid fothergilla (*Fothergilla x intermedia*) cultivars LEGEND OF THE FALL[®] and RED MONARCH[™] rival that of invasive burning bush.⁸

What are cultivars?

Cultivars are plants developed or selected from the wild by plant breeders to **enhance or change certain characteristics.** “Cultivar” is shorthand for **cultivated variety.** For some landscape alternatives, cultivars are recommended because they share more desirable traits with the invasive plant, are cold hardy in the Great Lakes region, or were bred to resist diseases.

CULTIVARS, POLLINATORS, AND WILDLIFE

Gardeners who prioritize providing pollinator forage or wildlife habitat should choose either **locally seed-grown plants or cultivars that have the same flower structure, flower color, and foliage color** as the species. Research indicates that these traits often have the biggest influence on provision of ecological benefits.



Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*)¹¹

On the **LANDSCAPE ALTERNATIVES TABLE** (see pages 3–4), the species common name is given first, followed by the scientific name in parentheses. Cultivar names appear in single quote marks, and trademarked names are in all caps.

EXAMPLES

Common Name (*Scientific name*) ‘Cultivar’
TRADEMARK

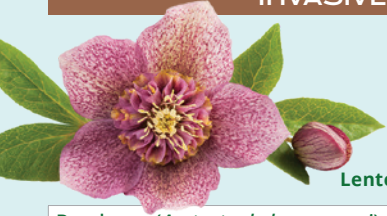
River birch (*Betula nigra*) ‘Cully’ HERITAGE[®]

Landscape Alternatives Table

GL = GREAT LAKES NATIVE
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◆ = SHARED CHARACTERISTIC BETWEEN
 INVASIVE AND ALTERNATIVE
 ◇ = CHARACTERISTIC SOMEWHAT PRESENT

INVASIVE GROUNDCOVER ALTERNATIVES



Lenten Rose¹¹

DON'T PLANT Wintercreeper
(Euonymus fortunei)
 Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Spreading Habit	Evergreen	Low Maintenance
Bearberry (<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>)	GL	2-6	◆	◆	◇
Christmas fern (<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>)	GL	3-9		◆	◆
Wild ginger (<i>Asarum canadense</i>)	GL	4-7	◆		◆
Virginia creeper (<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>)	GL	3-9	◆		◆
Cutleaf stephanandra (<i>Stephanandra incisa</i>) 'Crispa'	NN	3-7	◆		◆
Lenten rose (<i>Helleborus spp.</i>)	NN	4-9	◆	◇	◆

INVASIVE WOODY VINE ALTERNATIVES

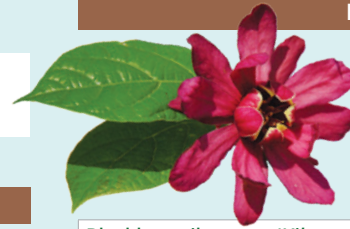


Trumpet Honeysuckle¹¹

DON'T PLANT Japanese Honeysuckle
(Lonicera japonica),
 Asian Bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), or
 Porcelain Berry (*Ampelopsis brevipedunculata*)
 Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Trellis or Arbor	Showy Flowers	Attracts Birds
American bittersweet (<i>Celastrus scandens</i>) 'Bailumn' AUTUMN REVOLUTION™ ^J	GL	2-8			◆
Red honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera dioica</i>)	GL	3-7	◆	◆	◆
Trumpet honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>)	GL	4-9	◇	◆	◆
Virginia creeper (<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>) ^B	GL	3-9			◆
Virgin's bower (<i>Clematis virginiana</i>)	GL	3-8	◇	◆	
American wisteria (<i>Wisteria frutescens</i>) 'Amethyst Falls'	NA	5-9	◆	◆	
Kentucky wisteria (<i>Wisteria macrostachya</i>) 'Blue Moon'	NA	4-9	◆	◆	
Dutchman's pipe (<i>Aristolochia macrophylla</i>)	NA	4-8	◇	◇	
Yellow passionflower (<i>Passiflora lutea</i>)	NA	5-10	◆	◆	◇
Everblooming honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera x heckrottii</i>) 'Goldflame' PINK LEMONADE™	NN	5-9	◆	◆	◇
Climbing hydrangea (<i>Hydrangea anomala subsp. petiolaris</i>)	NN	4-7		◆	
Japanese hydrangea vine (<i>Schizophragma hydrangeoides</i>)	NN	5-8		◆	

INVASIVE SHRUB ALTERNATIVES



Carolina Allspice¹¹

DON'T PLANT Border Privet
(Ligustrum obtusifolium)
 Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Good as a Screen	Good for Hedging	Showy Spring Flowers
Blackhaw viburnum (<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>)	GL	3-9	◆	◆	◆
Arrowwood viburnum (<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>) ^I	GL	3-8	◆	◆	◆
Carolina allspice (<i>Calycanthus floridus</i>)	NA	4-9	◆	◆	◇
Judd viburnum (<i>Viburnum x juddii</i>)	NN	4-8	◆	◆	◆



American Cranberry Bush¹¹

DON'T PLANT Burning Bush
(Euonymus alatus)
 Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Good for Hedging	Colorful Fall Foliage	Adaptable to Many Soils
American cranberry bush (<i>Viburnum opulus var. americanum</i>) 'Compactum' ^I	GL	2-7	◆	◆	◆
Red chokeberry (<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>)	GL	4-9	◆	◆	◆
Smooth witherod (<i>Viburnum nudum</i>) 'Winterthur' ^I	GL	5-9	◆	◆	◆
Fothergilla hybrids (<i>Fothergilla x. intermedia</i>) 'Mt Airy,' 'Blue Shadow,' LEGEND OF THE FALL®	NA	5-8	◆	◆	◇
Virginia sweetspire (<i>Itea virginica</i>) 'Henry's Garnet,' 'Morton' SCARLET BEAUTY™	NA	5-9	◆	◆ ^A	◇



Twinberry Flowers¹¹

DON'T PLANT Non-native Bush Honeysuckles (*Lonicera spp.*)
 Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Showy Fragrant Flowers	Attracts Birds	Shade Tolerant
Summersweet (<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>)	GL	4-9	◆	◆	◆
Twinberry (<i>Lonicera involucrata</i>)	GL	4-10	◆	◆	◇
Bottlebrush buckeye (<i>Aesculus parviflora</i>)	NA	4-8	◆		◆
Beautybush (<i>Kolkwitzia amabilis</i>) 'Pink Cloud' ^I	NN	4-8	◆	◆	◇



Ninebark¹¹

DON'T PLANT Japanese Barberry
(Berberis thunbergii)
 Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Good for Hedging	Adaptable and Deer Resistant	Purple Summer Foliage
Ninebark (<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>) DIABOLO®, LITTLE DEVIL™, SUMMER WINE®, TINY WINE®	GL	2-7	◆ ^A	◆	◆ ^A
Black chokeberry (<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>)	GL	3-8	◆	◆	
Winterberry holly (<i>Ilex verticillata</i>) 'Red Sprite' ^I	GL	3-9	◆ ^A	◆	
Bayberry (<i>Myrica pensylvanica</i>)	GL	3-7	◆	◆	
Mountain bush honeysuckle (<i>Diervilla rivularis</i>) KODIAK® Black	NA	5-7	◆	◆	◆ ^A

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SMALL INVASIVE TREE ALTERNATIVES

DON'T PLANT Amur Maple
(Acer ginnala)

Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Small Yard or Patio	Colorful Fall Foliage	Hardy to Zone 3
Redbud¹¹					
Apple serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier x grandiflora</i>)	GL	4-9	◆	◆	
American hornbeam (<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>)	GL	3-9	◆	◆	◆
Redbud (<i>Cercis canadensis</i>) 'Northern Strain' ^C	GL	4-9	◆	◆	
Pagoda dogwood (<i>Cornus alternifolia</i>)	GL	3-7	◆		◆
Three-flowered maple (<i>Acer triflorum</i>)	NN	4-8	◆	◆	

DON'T PLANT Buckthorn
(Rhamnus cathartica and Frangula alnus)

Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Dense Hedging	Attracts Birds	Hardy to Zone 3
Blood-twig Dogwood¹¹					
American arborvitae (<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>) 'Holmstrup' ^H	GL	3-7	◆	◆	◆
Blackhaw viburnum (<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>)	GL	3-9	◆	◆	◆
American hazelnut (<i>Corylus americana</i>) ^B	GL	4-9	◆	◆	
Vernal witchhazel (<i>Hamamelis vernalis</i>)	NA	4-8	◆	◆	
Blood-twig dogwood (<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>) 'Cato' ARCTIC SUN [®]	NN	4-8	◆	◆	

MEDIUM-TO-LARGE INVASIVE TREE ALTERNATIVES

DON'T PLANT Amur Corktree
(Phellodendron amurense)

Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Broad-Crowned	Sweeping Branches	Interesting Bark
Bur Oak¹¹					
American beech (<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>)	GL	3-9	◆	◆	◆
Bur oak (<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>)	GL	4-8	◆	◆	◆
Swamp white oak (<i>Quercus bicolor</i>)	GL	4-8	◆	◆	◆
Chinquapin oak (<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>)	GL	4-8	◆		◆
Pecan (<i>Carya illinoensis</i>)	NA	5-9	◆		◆

DON'T PLANT Black Alder
(Alnus glutinosa)

Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	40'+ at Maturity	Glossy Foliage	Good for Wet Areas
Sweet-gum¹¹					
American beech (<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>)	GL	3-9	◆	◇	◆
River birch (<i>Betula nigra</i>) 'Cully' HERITAGE [®]	GL	4-9	◇	◆ ^A	◆
Sycamore (<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>)	GL	4-9	◆		◆
Speckled alder (<i>Alnus incana</i> subsp. <i>rugosa</i>) ^B	GL	2-6		◆	◆
Sweet-gum (<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>) 'Moraine' ^C	NA	5-9	◆	◆	◆

DON'T PLANT Black Locust
(Robinia pseudoacacia)^D

Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Dappled Shade	Wide Range of Soil Types	Fast Growing
Quaking Aspen¹¹					
Thornless honey locust (<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> var. <i>inermis</i>) 'Skycole' SKY LINE ^{C, E}	GL	3-9	◆	◆	◆
Kentucky coffeetree (<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i>) 'Espresso' ^E	GL	4-8	◆	◆	
Quaking aspen (<i>Populus tremuloides</i>) ^B	GL	1-6		◆	◆
Northern red oak (<i>Quercus rubra</i>)	GL	4-8		◆	◇

DON'T PLANT Callery Pear
 a.k.a. Bradford Pear (*Pyrus calleryana*)

Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	Pyramidal or Rounded	Showy Flowers	Colorful Fall Foliage
Green Hawthorn¹¹					
Alleghany serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>) 'Cumulus,' 'Rogers' LUSTRE [®] , SPRING FLURRY [®]	GL	4-8	◆	◆	◆ ^A
Black gum a.k.a. tupelo (<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>) NORTHERN SPLENDOR [™] , TUPELO TOWER ^{™ C}	GL	4-9	◆		◆
Green hawthorn (<i>Crataegus viridis</i>) 'Winter King' ^F	NA	4-7		◆	◆
Yellowwood (<i>Cladrastis kentukea</i>)	NA	4-8	◆	◆	◆
Little-leaf linden (<i>Tilia cordata</i>) CORINTHIAN [®] , 'Greenspire,' 'Chancellor'	NN	3-7	◆	◆ ^G	◇

DON'T PLANT Norway Maple
(Acer platanoides)

Try these Instead:

	Native Category	Growing Zones	40'+ at Maturity	Urban Site Tolerance	Colorful Fall Foliage
Ginkgo¹¹					
Freeman maple (<i>Acer x. freemanii</i>) 'Jeffersred,' AUTUMN BLAZE [®]	GL	3-8	◆	◆	◆
Red maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>)	GL	3-9	◆	◇	◆
Miyabe maple (<i>Acer miyabei</i>) 'Morton' STATE STREET [®]	NN	4-8	◆	◆	◆
Ginkgo (<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>) Any male cultivar ^E	NN	4-9	◆	◆	◆

FOOTNOTES

- A This feature is considered improved in the suggested cultivar(s) and may not be pronounced in seed-grown plants.
 B Species prone to aggressive thicket or colony formation; may not be suitable for all sites.
 C Recommended for improved cold hardiness in northern zones (zone 5 and lower).

- D Black locust is native to parts of North America, but not to the Great Lakes Basin.
 E Recommended for reduced/absent seeding (reduced maintenance).
 F Recommended for improved disease resistance.
 G Flowering period is later in linden (early summer vs. early spring).

- H 'Holmstrup,' a compact cultivar, is recommended as an alternative to the 'Ron Williams' FINE LINE cultivar of glossy buckthorn. Most other arbovitae cultivars are too tall to be considered small trees.
 I Should be avoided in areas with viburnum leaf beetle problems.
 J Research has shown that some vendors sell invasive Asian bittersweet mislabeled as the native species. Make sure to buy from a trusted vendor. Purchasing the cultivar instead of seed grown can also help ensure that plants belong to the native species.

COVER IMAGES

- Clockwise from upper left:
 • Eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)⁷
 • Trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*)⁶
 • Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)⁸
 • Beauty bush (*Kolkwitzia amabilis*)⁸

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