

AMERICAN SENTRY LINDEN (GL)
(*Tilia americana*) 'McKSentry'
AMERICAN SENTRY⁸



RED MAPLE (GL)
(*Acer rubrum*)⁸



AMERICAN SYCAMORE (GL)
(*Platanus occidentalis*)⁸



ALLEGHENY SERVICEBERRY (GL)
(*Amelanchier laevis*)⁷

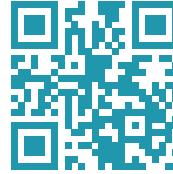
Landscape Alternatives

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



LANDSCAPE ALTERNATIVES

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



This brochure was published by the Midwest Invasive Plant Network for the Woody Invasives of the Great Lakes (WIGL) Collaborative. Recommendations were developed by the WIGL Collaborative's Landscape Alternatives Committee. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement.



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

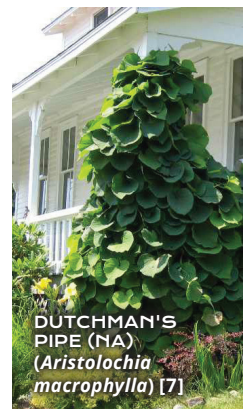
Great Lakes Native (GL) – A plant species that was **historically present in the Great Lakes Basin** prior to European colonization. Natural resource agencies and native plant societies are great resources to learn which plants are native to your location.

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.⁹

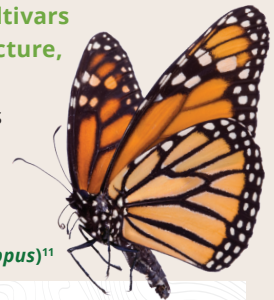
What are cultivars?

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 reverse), 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
 NA = NORTH AMERICAN NATIVE
 NN = NON-NATIVE AND NON-INVASIVE

◆ = SHARED CHARACTERISTIC BETWEEN INVASIVE AND ALTERNATIVE
 ◇ = CHARACTERISTIC SOMEWHAT PRESENT

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>) ¹ | 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</i> var. <i>americanum</i>) 'Compactum' ¹ | GL | 2-7 | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |
| Red chokeberry (<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>) | GL | 4-9 | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |
| Smooth witherod (<i>Viburnum nudum</i>) 'Winterthur' ¹ | GL | 5-9 | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |
| Fothergilla hybrids (<i>Fothergilla</i> x. <i>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' | 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' | 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 |

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</i> spp.) | 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 [™] | 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>) [®] | 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</i> subsp. <i>petiolaris</i>) | NN | 4-7 | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |
| Japanese hydrangea vine (<i>Schizophragma hydrangeoides</i>) | NN | 5-8 | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |

SMALL INVASIVE TREE ALTERNATIVES

Redbud¹¹

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 |
|--|-----------------|---------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 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 | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |

Blood-twig Dogwood¹¹

DON'T PLANT Buckthorn
(Rhamnus cathartica and Frangula alnus)
 Try these Instead:

| | Native Category | Growing Zones | Dense Hedging | Attracts Birds | Hardy to Zone 3 |
|---|-----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 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

Bur Oak¹¹

DON'T PLANT Amur Corktree
(Phellodendron amurense)
 Try these Instead:

| | Native Category | Growing Zones | Broad-Crowned | Sweeping Branches | Interesting Bark |
|---|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------|
| 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 | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |

Sweet-gum¹¹

DON'T PLANT Black Alder
(Alnus glutinosa)
 Try these Instead:

| | Native Category | Growing Zones | 40'+ at Maturity | Glossy Foliage | Good for Wet Areas |
|--|-----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 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 | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |

Quaking Aspen¹¹

DON'T PLANT Black Locust
(Robinia pseudoacacia)^D
 Try these Instead:

| | Native Category | Growing Zones | Dappled Shade | Wide Range of Soil Types | Fast Growing |
|--|-----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| 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 | ◆ | ◆ | ◇ |

Green Hawthorn¹¹

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 |
|---|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Alleghany serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>) 'Cumulus,' 'Rogers' LUSTRE [®] , 'SPRING FLURRY' [®] | GL | 4-8 | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ ^A |
| Black gum a.k.a. 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 | ◇ |

Ginkgo¹¹

DON'T PLANT Norway Maple
(Acer platanoides)
 Try these Instead:

| | Native Category | Growing Zones | 40'+ at Maturity | Urban Site Tolerance | Colorful Fall Foliage |
|--|-----------------|---------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 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 ^F | 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*)⁸
 - Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*)⁹
 - Beauty bush (*Kolkwitzia amabilis*)⁸

PHOTO CREDITS

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