



Landscape Plants for Wet Areas

A wet spot may be an asset in the landscape and can be developed into a place of considerable natural beauty. There are a number of plants with high ornamental value that have evolved to grow in soils that are constantly saturated. Many others prefer or tolerate wet soils. These plants help to slow runoff and filter the storm water that recharges our aquifers.

If you have a boggy spot in your landscape, this list of plants found growing in wetlands or adjacent to them will be useful. Most will also grow in soil that is better drained. Those marked with an "S" can tolerate light shade. Those marked with an "E" are evergreen.

Large Trees

Latin Names

Acer rubrum
Acer saccharinum
Alnus spp.*
Betula nigra
Betula papyrifera
Celtis laevigata
Larix laricina
Liquidambar styraciflua
Nyssa sylvatica
Picea glauca
Platanus acerifolia
Platanus occidentalis
Populus spp.
Quercus bicolor
Quercus macrocarpa
Quercus palustris
Salix spp.
Taxodium distichum
Thuja occidentalis

Common Names

Red Maple
Silver Maple
Alder
River Birch
Paper Birch
Sugar Hackberry
Tamarack
Sweet Gum
Sour Gum (Tupelo)
E-White Spruce
London Plane tree
Sycamore
Poplar (aspen)
Swamp White Oak
Bur Oak
Pin Oak
Willow
Bald Cypress
E,S-American Arborvitae

*The abbreviation spp. stands for species, meaning that any plant within the listed genus would be satisfactory.

Small Trees or Shrubs

Latin Names

Aesculus parvifolia
Amelanchier spp.
Aronia arbutifolia
Calycanthus floridus
Cephalanthus occidentalis
Cercis canadensis
Chionanthus virginicus
Clethra alnifolia
Cornus alba 'Sibirica'
Cornus racemosa
Cornus sericea
Crataegus crusgalli
Fothergilla spp.
Gaylussacia brachycera
Hamamelis spp.
Ilex glabra
Ilex laevigata
Ilex verticillata
Lindera benzoin
Magnolia virginiana
Myrica pennsylvanica
Rhododendron arborescens
Rhododendron calendulaceum
Rhododendron vaseyi
Rhododendron viscosum
Rosa palustris
Salix spp.
Sambucus candensis
Symphoricarpos spp.
Vaccinium spp.
Viburnum cassinoides
Viburnum dentatum
Viburnum lentago
Viburnum prunifolium
Viburnum trilobum

Common Names

S-Bottlebrush Buckeye
S-Serviceberry
Chokeberry
Sweetshrub
Buttonbush
S-Redbud
Fringetree
S-Summersweet
S-Siberian Dogwood
S-Gray Dogwood
S-Redosier Dogwood
Cockspur Hawthorn
Fothergilla
E-Huckleberry
S-Witch Hazel
E-Inkberry
S-Smooth Winterberry
S-Winterberry
S-Spicebush
Sweetbay Magnolia
Bayberry
S-Sweet Azalea
S-Flame Azalea
S-Pinkshell Azalea
S-Swamp Azalea
Swamp Rose
Willow
S-American Elderberry
Coralberry, Snowberry
S-Blueberry
S-Witherod
S-Arrowwood
S-Nannyberry
S-Black Haw
S-American Cranberrybush

Perennials

Latin Names

Amsonia tabernaemontana
Aruncus dioicus
Astilbe spp.
Astrantia major
Bergenia cordifolia
Brunnera macrophylla
Carex spp.
Chelone lyonii
Cimicifuga racemosa
Epimedium spp.
Eupatorium coelestinum
Eupatorium maculatum
Equisetum spp.
Filipendula spp.
Fritillaria meleagris
Geum rivale
Hemerocallis spp.
Hibiscus moscheutos
Hosta spp. and cultivars
Iris ensata
Iris sibirica
Lobelia cardinalis
Lysichitum spp.
Matteuccia struthiopteris
Mertensia virginica
Monarda didyma
Myosotis scorpioides
Osmunda spp.
Physostegia virginiana
Primula spp.
Rheum rhapoticum
Rodgersia pinnata
Symphytum x uplandicum
Trollius europaeus
Vernonia novaboracense
Veronicastrum virginicum

Common Names

S-Blue Star
S-Goatsbeard
S-Astilbe
S-Masterwort
S-Bergenia
S-Siberian Bugloss
S-Sedge
S-Turtlehead
S-Black Snake Root
S-Barrenwort
Hardy Ageratum
Joe Pye Weed
S-Horsetail (invasive tendencies)
S-Meadowsweet
S-Snake's Head
S-Water Avens
S-Daylily
Rose Mallow
S-Plantain Lily
Japanese Iris
S-Siberian Iris
S-Cardinal Flower
S-Swamp Cabbage
S-Ostrich Fern
S-Virginia Bluebells
S-Bee Balm
S-Forget-me-not
S-Royal Fern
S-False Dragonhead
S-Primrose
Rhubarb
S-Rodgersia
S-Comfrey
S-Globe Flower
Iron Weed
Culver's Root

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