
The Best Native Plants for the New York Area

The Best Native Trees and Shrubs for the Northeast

North American Oaks and Cultivars - *Quercus alba* (White), *macrocarpa* (Burr); *stellata* (Post); *rubra* (Red); *velutina* (Black); *Q pallustris* (Pin); *Q coccinea* (Scarlet) and others.

Most oaks grow to a height of 40-80 feet tall at maturity, which can take decades. Growth is moderate. At 10 years of age, most oaks will be 20-30 feet tall. Oaks have attractive bark and lobed green leaves and red fall color. They are the #1 wildlife tree in the Northeast. In spring, their bloom-time and leaf-out coincides with warbler migration, which means many hungry birds keeping the caterpillar population in check. Acorns provide both birds and other wildlife plenty of fall and winter food. The leaves help to keep the soil acid and feed the soil microbes as they break down. Full Sun - evenly moist, well-drained soil

Black, Bird (Pin), Choke Cherries and Cvs - *Punus serotina*, *pennsylvanica*, and *virginiana*

Black Cherries grow large slowly to 40-60 feet. Pin Cherries grow quickly but do not live as long (20-30 years) Choke Cherries are a small tree to 16 feet. All produce spring flowers which pollinators nectar on, and small cherries that birds eat in summertime. They also produce many caterpillars for birds and other animals to feed to their offspring. Sun to part shade - evenly moist well-drained soil

Grey, Black, River Birch and Cvs - *Betula populifolia*, *lenta*, and *nigra* - Birch trees are medium height trees and are attractive especially when planted in groups. All have serrated leaves and yellow fall color. The bark is particularly attractive. They produce caterpillars for wildlife to eat and the seeds are enjoyed by chickadees, redpolls, and other small songbirds. 15'-40'. Sun to part shade - moist well-drained to wet soil

American Beech and Cultivars - *Fagus grandifolia* - Beech grow slowly to 50 - 80 feet. They have smooth silvery bark and branching starts low to the ground. They produce many species of caterpillars and other insects for birds to feed to their offspring. They also produce nutlets that are attractive to many types of wildlife. Sun to part shade - moist well-drained soil

Winterberry Holly, Inkberry and Cultivars - *Ilex verticellata* and *glabra* - Winterberry Holly is an attractive large shrub or small tree to 15'. It drops its leaves in fall but the red berries on female plants persist through winter, unless a flock of Waxwings or Robins finds them. Inkberry provides cover year-round since it's evergreen. Birds and other wildlife are not as fond of the berries but will eat them as winter progresses. They typically grow to 8'. Both are excellent nectar sources for pollinators in spring and a decent source of insect protein during the summer. To insure berries, make sure male and female plants are purchased. Only one male is necessary for quite a few females. Both species take sun to part shade and moist well-drained soil. Winterberry also tolerates wet soil.

The Dogwoods - Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus Florida*) Pagoda Dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*) and Red-Twig/Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea* aka *stolonifera*)

Flowering and Pagoda Dogwoods are small trees to 20 feet tall. Flowering Dogwood has large attractive white or pink Spring flowers and bright red fall berries loved by birds. Pagoda (Alternate-leaved) Dogwood has clusters of tiny blooms loved by bees and other pollinators and fall berries which birds and other wildlife find very attractive. Red-Twig Dogwood are shrubs that grow 4-8 feet tall and wide. They have very striking bright red stems in winter and white berries that birds enjoy. They offer good cover and nesting sites and are a good pollinator nectar source when in bloom. All dogwoods are Sun to part shade - Moist well-drained soil. Red-Twig tolerates wet soil

American Red Cedar and Cultivars - *Juniperus virginiana* - Red Cedar has an upright pyramidal habit and shaggy reddish bark when mature. It grows to 40-60 feet on average. It has evergreen scales and short needles which are very aromatic. The female plants have juicy berry-like cones that waxwings and other birds and wildlife devour, and the tree provides excellent cover and nesting sites. Sun to light shade - Well-drained soil

Highbush and Lowbush Blueberries and Cultivars - *Vaccinium corymbosum* (Highbush) and *angustifolium* (Lowbush) - Blueberries have small glossy oval leaves and waxy white bells that bees love. The flowers are followed by summer fruit that everybody loves, including people. Highbush grow to 6-10 feet and Lowbush rarely grow taller than 2 feet. Sun to part shade - Moist well-drained to wet acidic soil

Serviceberry, Shadbush- *Amelanchier arborea* - White flowers in early spring, edible berries and fall color, small tree

Bayberry- *Morella carolinensis*- semi-evergreen, adapted to sandy soil, large shrub

Viburnum, *Viburnum nudum* or *acerifolium*- bush with spring flowers and fall berries

Hydrangia, Oak leaf Hydrangia, *Hydrangea quercifolia* - bush with summer flowers

Summersweet, *Clethra alnifolia*, - bush blooms in summer

