

## Common Invasives in Central Kentucky



tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)



wintercreeper (*Euonymus fortunei*)



bush honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*)

# Landscaping with Native Plants



University of Kentucky  
Natural Resources Conservation  
and Management Curriculum

## What are Natives?

Natives are plants that evolved over geologic time and are distributed across the landscape largely in response to climatic episodes and adaptation to site conditions related to land formation. European settlement to North America resulted in the introduction of a variety of “exotic” plant species.

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## What are Exotics?

Exotic plants (also known as non-native and alien) plants are directly or indirectly, deliberately or accidentally introduced by human action. Exotic plants are not necessarily introduced from a different continent; they are considered exotic if they are not a natural element of a regional landscape .

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## What are Invasives?

Although many exotic plant species are harmless, some can pose a significant threat to native flora and fauna of an ecosystem. Such plants can invade native plant communities, spread, out-compete, and displace natives; hence they are termed invasive. This disturbs natural ecosystem functions, which ultimately leads to a loss in biodiversity.

## Benefits of Natives...

- Native plants are adapted to regional conditions and may require less maintenance.
- They are hardy, withstand extreme winter cold, and do not suffer from die back.
- Due to their natural adaptations, natives require fewer pesticides and fertilizers, deeming them environmentally friendly.
- Natives provide food and shelter for native wildlife; thereby, promoting biodiversity.
- By utilizing native plants we restore regional landscapes and promote stewardship of our natural heritage.

## Wildlife and Natives...

- Native plant species have a natural hardiness which allows them to endure Kentucky’s growing seasons and to which wildlife have become adapted to over thousands of years.
- Unlike mowed lawns, native plants provide food and shelter for wildlife.
- Native plants can make a beautiful, diverse, hardy, and low maintenance yard or greenway by requiring no fertilizers, fewer pesticides, and less water than lawns.

# Native Plant Recommendations\*

## Small trees and shrubs

Common Name	Scientific Name
indigo bush	<i>Amorpha fruticosa</i>
common pawpaw	<i>Asimina triloba</i>
eastern redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>
silky dogwood	<i>Cornus amomum</i>
wild hydrangea	<i>Hydrangea arborescens</i>
spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>
ninebark	<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>
hoptree	<i>Ptelea trifoliata</i>
southern arrowwood	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>
alleghany serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>
American plum	<i>Prunus americana</i>
black chokeberry	<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>
Carolina buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus caroliniana</i>
staghorn sumac	<i>Rhus hirta</i>
American bladdernut	<i>Staphylea trifolia</i>
nannyberry	<i>Viburnum lentago</i>

## Trees

Common Name	Scientific Name
shellbark hickory	<i>Carya laciniosa</i>
yellowwood	<i>Cladrastis kentukea</i>
white ash	<i>Fraxinus americana</i>
green ash	<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>
Shurmard oak	<i>Quercus shumardii</i>
white oak	<i>Quercus alba</i>

## Trees

Common Name	Scientific Name
yellow birch	<i>Betula alleghaniensis</i>
white ash	<i>Fraxinus americana</i>
honeylocust	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>
Kentucky coffeetree	<i>Gymnocladus dioicus</i>
black walnut	<i>Juglans nigra</i>
sweetgum	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>
yellow-poplar	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>
pin oak	<i>Quercus palustris</i>
black willow	<i>Salix nigra</i>
boxelder	<i>Acer negundo</i>
red maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>
river birch	<i>Betula nigra</i>
blackgum	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>
hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>
American sycamore	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>
American beech	<i>Fagus grandifolia</i>
yellow buckeye	<i>Aesculus flava</i>
bitternut hickory	<i>Carya cordiformis</i>
pignut hickory	<i>Carya glabra</i>
sweet pecan	<i>Carya illinoensis</i>
shagbark hickory	<i>Carya ovata</i>
bur oak	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>
sugar maple	<i>Acer saccharum</i>

\*all species are bluegrass and riparian

## Grasses

Common Name	Scientific Name
big bluestem	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>
fox sedge	<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>
river oats	<i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i>
switchgrass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>
indian grass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>
sideoats gama	<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i>
broomsedge	<i>Andropogon virginicus</i>
prairie switchgrass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>
little bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>

## Perennials

Common Name	Scientific Name
swamp milkweed	<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>
blazing star	<i>Liatris spicata</i>
cardinal flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>
great blue lobelia	<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>
short's aster	<i>Aster hortii</i>
ironweed	<i>Veronia altissima</i>
columbine	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>
purple coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>
pink turtlehead	<i>Chelone glabra</i>
wild geranium	<i>Geranium maculatum</i>
monkey flower	<i>Mimulus alatus</i>
blue vervain	<i>Verbena hastata</i>
culver's root	<i>Veronicastrum virginicum</i>
Joe-Pye weed	<i>Eupatorium fistulosum</i>

## Common Invasives and Native Replacements

Invasive Species	Native Replacement
garlic mustard ( <i>Alliaria officinalis</i> )	wild ginger ( <i>Asarum canadense</i> )
bush honeysuckle ( <i>Lonicera maackii</i> )	spicebush ( <i>Lindera benzoin</i> ) American holly ( <i>Ilex opaca</i> ) pawpaw ( <i>Asimina triloba</i> )
Japanese honeysuckle ( <i>Lonicera japonica</i> )	trumpet creeper ( <i>Campsis radicans</i> )
purple loosestrife ( <i>Lythrum salicaria</i> )	blazing star ( <i>Liatris spicata</i> ) obedient plant ( <i>Physostegia virginiana</i> ) great blue lobelia ( <i>Lobelia siphilitica</i> )
burning bush ( <i>Euonymus alatus</i> )	spicebush ( <i>Lindera benzoin</i> )
English ivy ( <i>Hedra helix</i> )	Virginia creeper ( <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i> )
multiflora rose ( <i>Rosa multiflora</i> )	staghorn sumac ( <i>Rhus hirta</i> ) smooth sumac ( <i>Rhus glabra</i> )
wintercreeper ( <i>Euonymus fortunei</i> )	wild ginger ( <i>Asarum canadense</i> ) Allegheny spurge ( <i>Pachysandra procumbens</i> )



Purple Loosestrife taking over wetland habitat