



Deer Tick (*Ixodes scapularis*)
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.

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.



AMERICAN BITTERSWEET (GL) (*Celastrus scandens*)
VERNAL WITCHHAZEL (NA) (*Hamamelis vernalis*)



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.

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



DUTCHMAN'S PIPE (NA) (*Aristolochia macrophylla*) [7]
SUMMERSWEET (NA) (*Clethra alnifolia*) [8]

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.

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



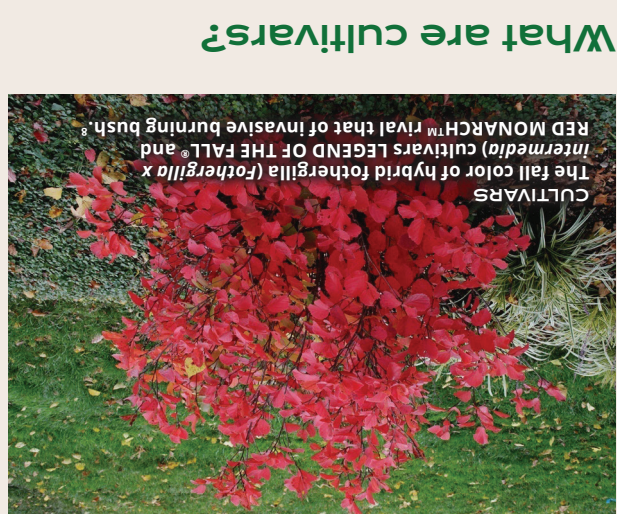
This brochure was published by the Midwest Invasive Plant Network for the Woody Invasives of the Great Lakes (WIGL) Collaborative. Recommendations were developed by the WIGL Collaborative's Landscape Alternatives Committee. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement.

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.

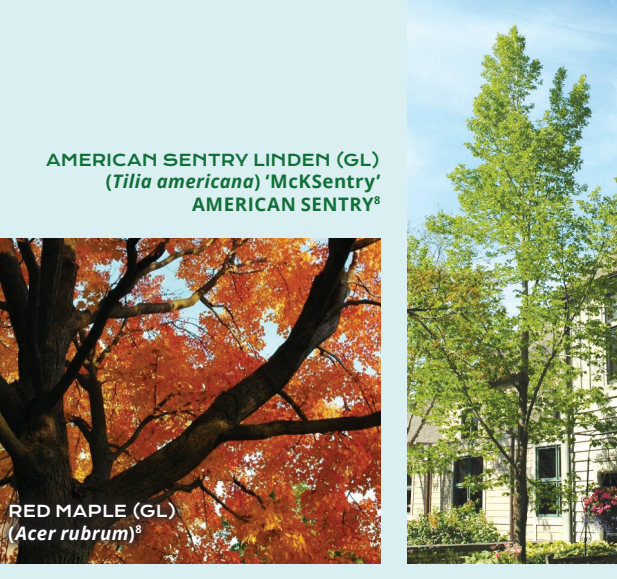
EXAMPLES
Common Name (Scientific name) 'Cultivar' TRADEMARK
River birch (*Betula nigra*) 'Cully' HERITAGE®

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 often has the biggest influence on provision of ecological benefits.



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



AMERICAN SENTRY LINDEN (GL) (*Tilia americana*) 'McKSentry' AMERICAN SENTRY®
RED MAPLE (GL) (*Acer rubrum*)®



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

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 withered (<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

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
Redbud ¹¹					
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. 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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