

Native Plants and Natural Plant Communities for Difficult Sites

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What are native species?

What are natural plant communities?

For the most difficult sites (leaving the site alone) – just a few examples listed for each condition

WET (including rainwater basins)

ostrich fern – *Matteuccia struthiopteris*
cinnamon fern – *Osmunda cinnamomea*
royal fern – *Osmunda regalis*
northern sea oats – *Chasmanthium latifolium*
soft rush – *Juncus effusus*
swamp milkweed – *Asclepias incarnata*
turtlehead – *Chelone glabra*
Joe-pye weed – *Eupatorium maculatum*
rose mallow – *Hibiscus moscheutos*
blue flag – *Iris versicolor*
cardinal flower – *Lobelia cardinalis*
American wisteria – *Wisteria frutescens*
red chokeberry – *Aronia arbutifolia*
buttonbush – *Cephalanthus occidentalis*
summersweet clethra – *Clethra alnifolia*
silky dogwood – *Cornus amomum*
red-twig dogwood – *Cornus sericea*
winterberry – *Ilex verticillata*
Virginia sweetspire – *Itea virginica*
swamp azalea – *Rhododendron viscosum*
swamp rose – *Rosa palustris*
witherod viburnum – *Viburnum cassinoides*
yellowroot – *Xanthorhiza simplicissima*
river birch – *Betula nigra*
shellbark hickory – *Carya laciniosa*
Atlantic white-cedar – *Chamaecyparis thyoides*
sweetgum – *Liquidambar styraciflua*
sweetbay magnolia – *Magnolia virginiana*
blackgum – *Nyssa sylvatica*
swamp white oak – *Quercus bicolor*
pin oak – *Quercus palustris*
willow oak – *Quercus phellos*
black willow – *Salix nigra*
baldcypress – *Taxodium distichum*

DRY

hairy lip fern – *Cheilanthes lanosa*
hay-scented fern – *Dennstaedtia punctilobula*
marginal shield fern – *Dryopteris marginalis*
butterfly weed – *Asclepias tuberosa*
prairie-smoke – *Geum triflorum*
blue lupine – *Lupinus perennis*
bergamot – *Monarda fistulosa*
eastern prickly-pear cactus – *Opuntia humifusa*
prairie coneflower – *Ratibida pinnata*

devil's-walkingstick – *Aralia spinosa*
bearberry – *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*
fringetree – *Chionanthus virginicus*
black huckleberry – *Gaylussacia baccata*
shrubby St. John's-wort – *Hypericum prolificum*
sand cherry – *Prunus pumila*
fragrant sumac – *Rhus aromatica*
winged sumac – *Rhus copallina*
gray birch – *Betula populifolia*
American smoketree – *Cotinus obovatus*
cockspur hawthorn – *Crataegus crus-galli*
pitch pine – *Pinus rigida*
scrub oak – *Quercus ilicifolia*
shingle oak – *Quercus imbricaria*
bur oak – *Quercus macrocarpa*
chestnut oak – *Quercus prinus*
black oak – *Quercus velutina*

SALINE

seaside goldenrod – *Solidago sempervirens*
prairie cordgrass – *Spartina pectinata*
horizontal juniper – *Juniperus horizontalis*
northern bayberry – *Myrica pensylvanica*
beach plum – *Prunus maritima*
eastern redcedar – *Juniperus virginiana*
blackjack oak – *Quercus marilandica*
post oak – *Quercus stellata*

LOW pH (acidic)

black chokeberry – *Aronia melanocarpa*
New Jersey tea – *Ceanothus americanus*
sweetfern – *Comptonia peregrina*
teaberry – *Gaultheria procumbens*
mountain-laurel – *Kalmia latifolia*
pinxter azalea – *Rhododendron periclymenoides*
lowbush blueberry – *Vaccinium angustifolium*
highbush blueberry – *Vaccinium corymbosum*
sourwood – *Oxydendrum arboreum*

HIGH pH (alkaline)

wild columbine – *Aquilegia canadensis*
shrubby cinquefoil – *Potentilla fruticosa*
black maple – *Acer nigrum*
yellowwood – *Cladrastis kentukea*
chinkapin oak – *Quercus muehlenbergii*
Shumard oak – *Quercus shumardii*
northern white-cedar – *Thuja occidentalis*

SHADE

maidenhair fern – *Adiantum pedatum*
lady fern – *Athyrium filix-femina*
plantain sedge – *Carex plantaginea*
sedge – *Carex platyphylla*
wild ginger – *Asarum canadense*
black snakeroot – *Cimicifuga racemosa*
Allegheny spurge – *Pachysandra procumbens*
bloodroot – *Sanguinaria canadensis*
blue-stemmed goldenrod – *Solidago caesia*
foamflower – *Tiarella cordifolia*

sweetshrub – *Calycanthus floridus*
bush-honeysuckle – *Diervilla lonicera*
leatherwood – *Dirca palustris*
dwarf fothergilla – *Fothergilla gardenii*
witch-hazel – *Hamamelis virginiana*
smooth hydrangea – *Hydrangea arborescens*
oakleaf hydrangea – *Hydrangea quercifolia*
spicebush – *Lindera benzoin*
rosebay rhododendron – *Rhododendron maximum*
flowering raspberry – *Rubus odoratus*
bladdernut – *Staphylea trifolia*
red buckeye – *Aesculus pavia*
serviceberry – *Amelanchier arborea*
pawpaw – *Asimina triloba*
American hornbeam – *Carpinus caroliniana*
eastern redbud – *Cercis canadensis*
alternate-leaf dogwood – *Cornus alternifolia*
American holly – *Ilex opaca*
bigleaf magnolia – *Magnolia macrophylla*

WIDE RANGE OF TOLERANCES

switchgrass – *Panicum virgatum*
eastern ninebark – *Physocarpus opulifolius*
red maple – *Acer rubrum*

Key Reference

Leopold, Donald J. 2005. *Native Plants of the Northeast: A Guide for Gardening and Conservation*. Timber Press, Portland, OR, 308 p.