



Use Native Flowering Plants Instead of Invasives

INVASIVE: CHINESE WISTERIA

Latin name: *Wisteria sinensis*

Native origin: China

Introduction: Around 1816 as an ornamental

Distribution: Found mainly along the East Coast as well as IL, KY, TN, NY, PA and LA; reported invasive in 16 states

Ecological threat: Chinese wisteria can establish itself in partial shade but prefers full sun, and it will climb any surrounding vegetation in search of sunlight. It is a long-lived plant that spreads rapidly via roots, stems and abundant seeds and will also re-sprout from stems that have been cut back.

Description: Vigorously growing woody vine that is only limited by the height of the object it climbs. Chinese wisteria produces sweet-smelling large violet-to-blue clusters of flowers in the spring, followed by 4–6 inch seedpods.

NATIVE ALTERNATIVE: AMERICAN WISTERIA

Latin name: *Wisteria frutescens*

Native habitat and range: Stream banks, swamps and woodland edges in VA to MO, south to FL and TX

Description: Climbing vine, similar to Chinese wisteria but not quite as vigorous. It has small, pointed dark green glossy leaves and develops large clusters of purple-to-blue flowers in late spring and early summer. These beautiful and fragrant flowers give way to long knobby seedpods and yellow-to-golden foliage in autumn.

Habit: Perennial flowering climbing vine reaching 20–30 feet or more

Soil type: Moist fertile soil

Sun requirements: Full sun to partial shade; will not flower heavily in full shade

Growth rate: Moderate

Notes: American wisteria will begin flowering when the vine is only a few feet long and is a butterfly nectar source as well as a larvae host plant.



Wisteria frutescens



Use Native Grasses Instead of Invasives

INVASIVE: COMMON REED GRASS

Latin name: Phragmites australis

Native origin: Eurasia; a native Phragmites has been found in natural areas in the southwest United States.

Introduction: Late 1900s, accidentally brought in with ship ballast material

Distribution: Throughout the continental United States and Canada; reported invasive in 18 states

Ecological Threat: Common reed can produce thousands of seeds annually as well as reproduce via pieces of roots washed along rivers and shorelines. It colonizes a site quickly, crowding out native plant communities, altering habitat for wildlife and creating fire hazards. Its root system can reach as far as several feet deep and spread as much as 10 feet in a single season if conditions are favorable.

Description: A tall perennial grass reaching more than 15 feet in height, it forms dense clumps of long 1 inch-wide leaves with grey-to-silver seed heads forming in late summer.

NATIVE ALTERNATIVE: BLUEJOINT GRASS

(found in Shedd xeriscape garden)

Latin name: Calamagrostis canadensis

Native habitat and range: Marshes, wet prairies and open woods throughout Canada and the continental United States, except the Gulf Coast states and OK, AK, SC

Description: Perennial clumping grass with a multitude of thin stems and leaves; seed heads begin purple and fade to tan or gold later in autumn.

Height/width: 3–5 feet tall

Soil type: Moist to wet

Sun requirements: Sun to shade

Notes: A great choice for creating winter interest in the garden as well as for use in rain gardens due to its deep roots and ability to tolerate variable moisture levels.



*Calamagrostis
canadensis*



Use Native Shrubs Instead of Invasives

INVASIVE: JAPANESE BARBERRY

Latin name: *Berberis thunbergii*

Native origin: Japan

Introduction: In 1875 as an ornamental in arboretum and botanic gardens

Distribution: From ME south to NC, west to MO and north to WI; reported invasive in 21 states

Ecological Threat: Japanese barberry forms dense patches on forest floors, open woodlands, wetlands, pastures and meadows. It replaces native plants as it becomes established and diminishes wildlife habitat and food sources. It is shade and drought-tolerant and highly adaptable to most conditions.

Description: A thick deciduous thorny shrub 2–8 feet in height, it has small oval leaves that start out red and turn green. Small flowers produced in late spring give way to bright red fruits that persist through the winter.

NATIVE ALTERNATIVE: COMMON WINTERBERRY

(found in Shedd accessible entrance garden)

Latin name: *Ilex verticillata*

Native habitat and range: Low woods, swamps and wetlands from Nova Scotia to MN, south to FL and AK

Description: Common winterberry is a medium-to-large deciduous round shrub with deep green, sharply pointed foliage. It produces bright red berries in autumn that persist into winter.

Height at maturity: 6–10 feet in height and equally as wide

Soil type: Fertile soil, moist but well-drained

Sun requirements: Full to partial sun

Growth rate: Slow to moderate

Notes: Established plants will tolerate variations in moisture levels. Plant at least one male species within a group of female plants to insure the production of berries, a food source for many birds such as woodpeckers, cedar waxwings, thrushes, finches, cardinals and chickadees.



Ilex verticillata



Use Native Trees Instead of Invasives

INVASIVE: NORWAY MAPLE

Latin name: *Acer platanoides*

Native origin: Europe and western Asia

Introduction: In 1756 as an ornamental; widely planted as a parkway tree by the City of Chicago

Distribution: From BC to OR, west to MT, Ontario south to MN, WI south to TN, east to NC, north to ME and Nova Scotia; reported invasive in 19 states

Ecological threat: Has escaped cultivation through the production of large quantities of seeds that germinate rapidly. Creates dense shade, displacing native trees, shrubs and wildflowers. Nearly impenetrable surface roots also choke out natives.

Description: Deciduous tree reaching 40–60 feet, but can reach as much as 100 feet. Flowering occurs in early spring and foliage turns yellow late in the fall.

NATIVE ALTERNATIVE: SUGAR MAPLE

(found in Shedd accessible entrance garden)

Latin name: *Acer saccharum*

Native habitat and range: Deciduous forests throughout New England, NY, PA and the Middle Atlantic states, south to NC, west to IA.

Description: The sugar maple does well in fertile soil in cooler areas. This maple produces a rounded and branched crown with five-lobed leaves that turn bright orange in fall.

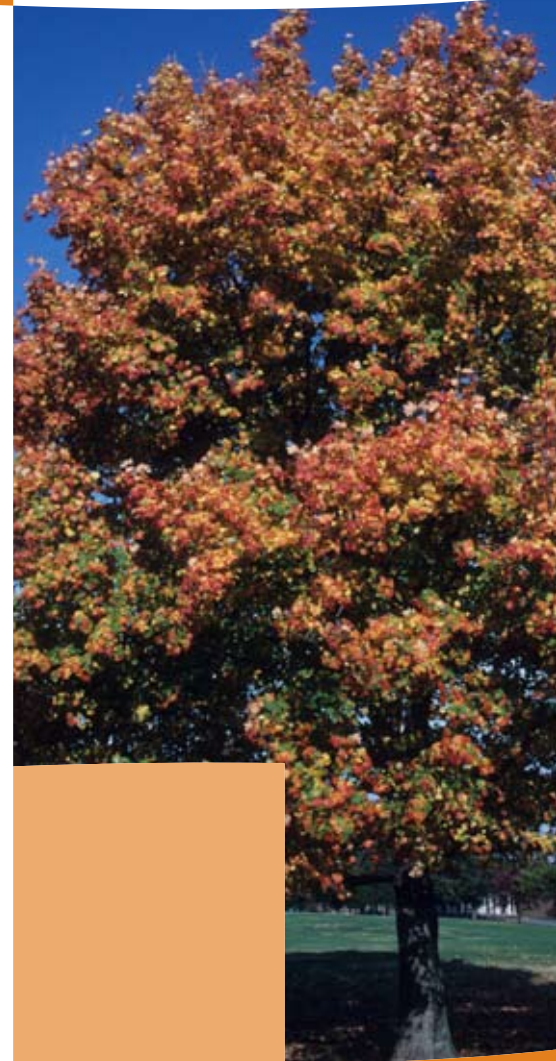
Height at maturity: 50–80 feet

Soil type: Well-drained, loamy soil

Sun requirements: Shade to full sun

Growth rate: Moderate to slow

Notes: The tree provides good nesting sites for robins and goldfinches; seeds, twigs and bark are good food sources for wildlife. The sugar maple is the principal source of maple sugar!



Acer saccharum