

Key

Species in boxes are our top picks and are highlighted with a photo.

W = Tolerates wet conditions

D = Tolerates dry conditions

= Prefers sunny locations

= Prefers shade

<http://chicagorti.org/HealthyHedges>

Healthy Hedges

Recommended privacy screen replacements, following removal of European buckthorn



Grass, Ground, and Herbaceous

Shrubs

Understory/Small Trees

Canopy

Canada Anemone
Anemone canadensis
(1-2' H x 1' W)

Wild Ginger
Asarum canadense
(6" H x 6-12" W)

Butterfly Weed
Asclepias tuberosa
(2-3' H x 2-4' W)

One of the showiest milkweeds, it has orange clusters of flowers and long, narrow leaves. It is drought-tolerant, will not move around much in the garden, and is a host for many pollinators.

Swamp Milkweed
Asclepias incarnata
(2-5' H x 2-3' W)

Lady Fern
Athyrium filix-femina
(2' H x 1' W)

This hardy fern is great for perennial borders and woodlands.

Hairy Wood Mint
Blephilia hirsutus
(3' H x 18" W)

Wild Hyacinth
Camassia schilloides
(6-12" H x 12" W)

Palm Sedge
Carex muskingumensis
(2-3' H x 1-2' W)

Curly Wood Sedge
Carex rosea
(12" H x 12" W)

Beak Grass
Diarrhena obovata
(2' H x 1' W)

Pale Purple Coneflower
Echinacea pallida
(2-3' H x 1-2' W)

Bottlebrush Grass
Elymus hystrix
(3-4' H x 1" W)

Purple Lovegrass
Eragrostis spectabilis
(1-2' H x 1-2' W)

Big-leaf Aster
Eurybia macrophylla
(1' H x 1' W)

Wild Geranium
Geranium maculatum
(1' H x 1' W)

Colony-forming forb with showy pink-purple flowers.

Rough Blazing Star
Liatris aspera
(2-3' H x 1-2' W)

Virginia Bluebells
Mertensia virginica
(2' H x 1-2' W)

Solomon's Seal
Polygonatum biflorum
(2-4' H x 1-2' W)

Wild Petunia
Ruellia humilis
(1-2' H x 1-3' W)

Little Bluestem
Schizachyrium scoparium
(2-4' H x 1-2' W)

Prairie Dropseed
Sporobolus heterolepis
(1-2' H x 2-3' W)

Dense tufts of sprawling narrow-leaved grass that turn golden in fall with a lovely sweet scent.

Sky Blue Aster
Symphotrichum oolentangiense
(2-3' H x 1-2' W)

Golden Alexanders
Zizia aurea
(1-3' H x 2-3' W)

Lead Plant
Amorpha canescens
(1-3' H x 1-3' W)

Shrub Indigo
Amorpha fruticosa
(10-15' H x 15-20' W)

New Jersey Tea
Ceanothus americanus
(2-4' H x 2-4' W)

Posies of white flowers transform into unique seed heads for winter interest on this densely rounded shrub.

Buttonbush
Cephalanthus occidentalis
(6-12' H x 12-18' W)

Hazelnut
Corylus americana
(5-8' H x 5-10' W)

Witchhazel
Hamamelis virginiana
(10-20' H x 15-20' W)

Wild Hydrangea
Hydrangea arborescens
(3-5' H x 3-5' W)

Shrubby St. John's Wort
Hypericum prolificum
(3-5' H x 3-5' W)

Winterberry
Ilex verticillata
(6-12' H x 6-8' W)

Spicebush
Lindera benzoin
(6-12' H x 6-12' W)

Ninebark
Physocarpus opulifolius
(5-10' H x 5-10' W)

Fragrant Sumac
Rhus aromatica
(5-8' H x 8-10' W)

American Currant
Ribes americanum
(3-5' H x 3-5' W)

Fast-growing shrub with arching stems. Drooping yellow flowers mature into sweet-tart, edible fruit. Fall foliage is a lovely red.

Carolina Rose
Rosa carolina
(3-8' H x 4-6' W)

Prairie Willow
Salix humilis
(5-8' H x 2-5' W)

Elderberry
Sambucus canadensis
(5-10' H x 5-10' W)

Bladdernut
Staphylea trifolia
(10-15' H x 8-12' W)

Early Low Blueberry
Vaccinium angustifolium
(2-3' H x 2-4' W)

This is one tough little shrub. White flowers in spring attract insects. Fruits appear in June and attract birds when ripe.

Nannyberry
Viburnum lentago
(15-20' H x 8-10' W)

Excellent privacy hedge replacement. Has clusters of white flowers in summer and lovely red foliage in fall.

Blackhaw
Viburnum prunifolium
(12-15' H x 12-20' W)

Downy Serviceberry
Amelanchier arborea
(15-25' H x 10-12' W)

Allegheny Serviceberry
Amelanchier laevis
(15-25' H x 15-25' W)

Blue Beech
Carpinus caroliniana
(20-25' H x 15-20' W)

Mid-sized trees with smooth, gray bark. This tree grows well in different soils and pH.

Redbud
Cercis canadensis
(20-30' H x 25-35' W)

Attractive multi-stemmed tree with heart-shaped leaves. Magenta flowers in spring transform into unique peapods.

Pagoda Dogwood
Cornus alternifolia
(15-25' H x 20-30' W)

Cockspur Hawthorn
Crataegus crus-galli
(20-25' H x 20-25' W)

Downy Hawthorn
Crataegus mollis
(20-30' H x 20-40' W)

Hardy hawthorn with distinct lateral branching, soft fuzzy leaves, and showy white flowers followed by red fruits.

Ironwood
Ostrya virginiana
(40-45' H x 20-30' W)

Chokecherry
Prunus virginiana
(20-25' H x 15-20' W)

Staghorn Sumac
Rhus typhina
(15-25' H x 15-25' W)

Arborvitae
Thuja occidentalis
(30-60' H x 10-15' W)

This is a hardy, versatile evergreen. The narrow profile makes it a nice choice for windbreaks. It requires very little care when used as a hedge.

American Beech
Fagus grandifolia
(50-80' H x 50-70' W)

White Pine
Pinus strobus
(80-120' H x 20-40' W)

White Oak
Quercus alba
(60-100' H x 100' W)

Stately long-lived oak found in every county of Illinois. Features light gray bark and rounded leaves that turn a rich red in fall.

Red Oak
Quercus rubra
(60-100' H x 100' W)

Basswood/Linden
Tilia americana
(60-90' H x 30-60' W)

Canadian Hemlock
Tsuga canadensis
(40-70' H x 25-35' W)

Provided by:

**Plants shown are not to scale and represent various seasonal characteristics.*

TIPS FROM OUR LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS & BEST PRACTICES

- Identify invasive species and remove them. Buckthorn is best controlled by cutting the stem a few inches above the soil, then applying herbicide to the cut stump.
- Assess what you have. Bare spots? Trees? Low areas with water? Have your soil tested. Learn the right plants for the right yard.
- Consider planting native species.
- Reduce turf grass and pesticide use.
- Eliminate insecticide use.
- Conserve water and collect rainwater.
- Use a mulching mower instead of a bagger. Alternatively, rake and compost leaves and clippings to redistribute on gardens for nature's free fertilizer.

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Learn more online at
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By developing a network of critical landscapes, everyone can work together to safeguard the resources and places that benefit people, wildlife, and the economy.

Buckthorn is the most common tree in the Chicago region, making up approximately 40 percent of our canopy, according to a 2010 tree census conducted by the U.S. Forest Service and The Morton Arboretum.

It will continue to be an issue until the whole community is involved: from private landowners to homeowner associations, golf courses to garden clubs, businesses to school districts.

But momentum is building and will continue to build. See the reverse page for recommended species to plant in place of invasive buckthorn. Together, public and private partners are working toward a buckthorn-free Chicago region.

Let's tell this invader: "The BUCKTHORN stops here!"