

Approved Trees and Shrubs for D65 Schools

*Developed in partnership with Natural Habitat Evanston,
Village of Skokie Forester, City of Evanston Arborist and D65 Staff*

Updated: March 2025

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• Shrubs

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- o Wetter

• Helpful references

Given this robust list of approved trees and shrubs, D65 is intentional to:

- Not plant trees and shrubs with thorns on D65 school grounds for children's safety
- Acceptable to plant trees with berries that will minimally drop fruit (i.e. not messy) and require these to be planted away from sidewalks, parking lots and playgrounds
- Not plant trees with nuts on D65 school grounds due to concerns with maintenance of school grounds and children's allergies

OVERSTORY TREES (SUN – DRY/MOIST)

- **Basswood** (American Linden) 60-80' sun-part sun. American basswood is native to the Chicago area and is often used as a specimen or dense shade tree. Its heart-shaped leaves and fragrant flowers in June make it especially attractive for people, while songbirds and blue jays are attracted to its seeds and use the tree for shelter. [Link](#)
- **American Beech** *Fagus grandifolia*, Sun- part sun. 50-80' H x 50-70' W. American beech is a large, graceful native tree, excellent for large, park-like landscapes where it has room to spread its wide, low-growing branches. The massive trunk has beautiful silver-gray bark; the dark green summer foliage turns a golden-bronze in the fall. Leaves typically hang on well into the winter months adding to the seasonal interest. [Link](#)
- **Black Cherry** 50-60' full sun. Black Cherry is one of the few large trees that has highly

visible white flowers in the spring. It is a very fast growing tree at 30-36 inches per year. It produces an abundance of fruit which birds relish. Black Cherry should not be planted over a patio or sidewalk due to messy fruit. This tree can be easily identified by its bark, which resembles potato chips! Requires full sun and good garden soil. [Link](#)

- **Hackberry** 40-60' sun-part sun. Hackberry is a Chicago-area native and a sturdy, tolerant shade tree for parkways, parks, and other large areas. Its fleshy, purple-brown berries ripen in late summer and can persist through winter. The persistent fruits attract many birds that also find the tree to be a suitable nesting site. This has berries, but they do not create much of a mess. Birds usually eat them pretty quickly. [Link](#)
- **Oaks**
 - **Black Oak** -50-110' likes sandy soil, dry soil, sun-part sun. Tolerates poor soil. Tan ruddy fall color. [Link](#)
 - **Bur Oak** 3' at planting; 70-80' at maturity. Sun. Prefers dry or well drained soil, but tolerates clay, flooding and dry periods. The stately bur oak, native to the Midwest, is a great choice as a shade tree and for specimen plantings in parks, spacious yards, and other large areas. Its massive trunk has gray to brown furrowed bark and its branches bear lustrous dark green leaves that turn yellow-brown in fall. Large acorns with fringed caps attract birds and small mammals. [Link](#)
 - **Red Oaks** Saplings are 3-6' tall at planting; 60-75' at maturity; full-part sun. Prefers moist well drained soil, but tolerates clay, salt and dry periods. Northern red oak is a Midwest native and is one of the faster growing oaks for the home landscape. The leaves are handsome throughout the year, emerging pinkish-red, turning lustrous dark green in summer, and changing to russet-red to bright red in autumn. Its tolerance of salt and air pollution makes it a good tree for more exposed areas. Red Oak is one of the most shade tolerant of the oaks, making it a good choice to grow under existing trees. A few hours of sun per day is all it needs to grow. Although it is sometimes used as a street tree, it does much better in good garden soil and light shade. Fall color is an outstanding red. [Link](#)
 - **Shingle Oak** 50-60', sun-part sun. likes moist soil, tolerates dry, drought and wet. Ok in clay. Leaves are ovate with no lobes. [Link](#)
 - **Swamp Chestnut** 60-70'. Sun-part sun, dry soil. Leaves barely have lobes. Yellow brown fall color. [Link](#)
 - **Swamp White Oak** 3-4' at planting; 50-60' at maturity. Sun. Prefers moist well drained soil, but tolerates clay, flooding, salt and dry periods. Swamp white oak is a striking tree with attractive peeling bark, especially on young trees. The lustrous, lobed leaves have a two-tone appearance, dark green on top with a silvery-white underside. Fall color is an orange-gold to yellow in mid-autumn. An excellent shade tree for any landscape. [Link](#)
 - **White Oak** 50-80' sun. White oak is a massive, long-lived stately tree with wide spreading horizontal branches and wine-red fall color. This native tree provides shade for larger landscapes and parks. [Link](#)
 - **Chinkapin Oak** 50-80' sun. Chinkapin oak is native to the Midwest, where it is

often found as a specimen planting or as part of a grouping of trees in parks and large areas. Chinkapin oaks are found on dry, limestone outcrops in the wild and perform well in alkaline soils. Its glossy, coarsely-toothed leaves are yellow-green and small compared to most oaks. Young trees retain a pyramidal to oval habit with a pale gray, scaly ridged central trunk. As trees age, the crown becomes more rounded. [Link](#)

- **Scarlet Oak** 40-75', sun. Prefers moist soil, tolerates dry. Red autumn color. [Link](#)
- **Tulip Tree** 70-90', full-part sun, moist. The tulip tree is one of the largest native trees in North America. It is a member of the magnolia family and has distinct tulip shaped flowers. The showy, goblet shaped, orange-yellow-green flowers appear in late spring after the leaves form. The cone-like seed clusters sit upright on the branches. The golden-yellow fall color of the tuliptree makes this an excellent choice for large landscapes. [Link](#)
- **Yellow Buckeye** 60-80' full-part sun. Buckeyes are known for their flower displays in May, and yellow buckeyes are no exception. This Illinois native produces yellow flowers in upright clusters measuring up to 6 inches tall. In fall, the leaves display a yellow-orange color. [Link](#)

MIDSTORY TREES (SUN DRY/MOIST)

- **Hop Hornbeam/Ironwood** 25-40', sun-part sun, moist soil preferred, tolerates dry soil. Ironwood is a tough understory tree with beautiful birch-like leaves, grayish-brown flaky bark, fine-textured drooping branches, and attractive hop-like fruits. Ironwood is considered one of Illinois' toughest native hardwoods and is not only ornamental but resistant to many disease and insect problems. Excellent tree for naturalized landscapes. (*Ostrya virginiana*) **Fast growing.** [Link](#)
- **Yellowwood** 30 to 50', full sun, moist, drained soil. A medium- to large-sized tree with smooth bark, large hanging clusters of fragrant white flowers, and clear yellow fall color. Choose a yellowwood tree for excellent shade in a small to medium sized landscape. [Link](#)

UNDERSTORY TREES (SUN DRY/MOIST)

- **Dwarf Chinquapin Oak** 10' sun. It likes drier sites in full sun. The fall color is a reddish mix very much like its bigger brother, but the acorns look squashed. A nice addition to a sunny, dry border planting, or if you're looking for a unique plant. [Link](#)
- **Redbud** 15-35' In April and May, many neighborhoods are brightened by the purplish-pink flowers lining the dark branches of redbuds before their leaves open. This Chicago-area native plant evolved in the understory and along the edges of forests. It works especially well among evergreens that contrast with its color and shelter it from intense sunlight. Yellow leaf color in fall. **Fast growing.** [Link](#)

- **Serviceberry** like Downy Serviceberry (*amelanchier arborea*) 10-30' or **Amelanchier laevis** 15-25' or *Amelanchier canadensis* Shadblow serviceberry *Amelanchier canadensis* or shadblow serviceberry, is a small, native, understory tree with four-season interest. The early white spring flowers, outstanding orange-red fall color, and striking gray bark make it a lovely specimen for any landscape. The edible purplish-black fruit in late summer is attractive to many birds. Deciduous, early-flowering, large shrub or small tree. Shadblow has slightly fragrant, white flowers in drooping clusters which appear before the leaves emerge in early spring and produce edible berries. **Moderate growth rate.** [Link](#)
- **Prairie Crabapple** sun-part sun This small tree is about 10-25' tall that has a short trunk up to 1' across and a broad spreading crown. The value of Prairie Crab Apple to various kinds of wildlife is quite high. The nectar and pollen of the large flowers attract honeybees, bumblebees, and other long-tongued bees; they are probably the primary agents of cross pollination. Other visitors of the flowers include smaller bees, butterflies, and skippers. A variety of insects feed destructively on the foliage, fruit, flowers, wood, and plant juices of crab apples and apples (*Malus spp.*), including Prairie Crab Apple. **Moderate growth rate.** [Link](#)

OVERSTORY TREES (SHADE – DRY/MOIST)

- **Oaks**
 - **Black Oak** -50-110' likes sandy soil, dry soil, sun-part sun. Tolerates poor soil. Tan ruddy fall color. [Link](#)
 - **Red Oaks** Saplings are 3-6' tall at planting; 60-75' at maturity; full-part sun. Prefers moist well drained soil, but tolerates clay, salt and dry periods. Northern red oak is a Midwest native and is one of the faster growing oaks for the home landscape. The leaves are handsome throughout the year, emerging pinkish-red, turning lustrous dark green in summer, and changing to russet-red to bright red in autumn. Its tolerance of salt and air pollution makes it a good tree for more exposed areas. Red Oak is one of the most shade tolerant of the oaks, making it a good choice to grow under existing trees. A few hours of sun per day is all it needs to grow. Although it is sometimes used as a street tree, it does much better in good garden soil and light shade. Fall color is an outstanding red. [Link](#)
 - **Shingle Oak** 50-60', sun-part sun. likes moist soil, tolerates dry, drought and wet. Ok in clay. Leaves are ovate with no lobes. [Link](#)
 - **Swamp Chestnut** 60-70'. Sun-part sun, dry soil. Leaves barely have lobes. Yellow brown fall color. [Link](#)

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- **Hop Hornbeam/Ironwood** 25-40', sun-part sun, moist soil preferred, tolerates dry soil. Ironwood is a tough understory tree with beautiful birch-like leaves, grayish-brown flaky bark, fine-textured drooping branches, and attractive hop-like fruits. Ironwood is

considered one of Illinois' toughest native hardwoods and is not only ornamental but resistant to many disease and insect problems. Excellent tree for naturalized landscapes. (*Ostrya virginiana*) **Fast growing.** [Link](#)

UNDERSTORY TREES (SHADE DRY/MOIST)

- **Pagoda Dogwood** 15-25' Pagoda dogwood is an excellent native plant for the four-season garden. The unique horizontal branching pattern has a distinct tiered habit, often catching snow in the winter. Clusters of white flowers show up in spring, dark green foliage turns a beautiful burgundy-red in fall, and blue-black berries attract many birds. Pagoda dogwood makes an attractive small tree or large shrub in a shade garden or for naturalizing. **Moderate growth rate.** [Link](#)
- **Wafer Ash** 15' Wafer-ash is a small native tree or large shrub in the CITES (!) family. It produces small fragrant flowers and wafer-like winged seeds, similar to elms. It is a good plant for naturalizing or woodland landscapes. Despite the name, this tree is not a true ash tree and is unaffected by the emerald ash borer. [Link](#)

CONIFER – PREFER SUN

- **Eastern White Pine** 70', full sun. medium, medium dry, medium wet. White Pine is our fastest growing pine tree. Unlike most other pines, it tolerates light shade. Prefers good, well-drained garden soil with lower pH and protection from the west wind. Great as a large evergreen specimen tree or hedge planting if sheared regularly. Ideal time to plant pines is late July to the first of October, and they typically do poorly if planted after October 1st on exposed sites. Extremely susceptible to salt damage. Our White Pines are unclipped for a more natural appearance. **Growth rate fast with sun, slower in understory.** [Link](#)
- **Red Cedar** 60' Full sun, dry. Host for cedar-apple rust. A ubiquitous species of Illinois interstates and rest-stops, but also a surprisingly successful naturalizer and habitat builder. We may be a touch glib on that but that is usually how most people see this species. It's a shame. *Juniperus virginiana* has a lot to offer for those looking for winter cover/forage for birds, soil stabilization or even screening on poor soils. It is also one of those rarer evergreens that has a fall color (kinda), changing to a rusty orange green. There are a couple of drawbacks that need to be considered before planting this in your yard. First, it is a common vector to cedar apple rust that can be damaging to apple and related species. Possibly very damaging, so please be sure of impact before planting. Second, it will seed into other areas, easily. Third, it is poky, very, very poky. Other than that we can't recommend it enough. **Slow growth rate.** [Link](#)
- **White Cedar** 40' full-part sun, medium-medium wet. I have seen this plant used and abused as a hedge or warped into bizarre shapes. Now if you need it to do that, then it does adapt well enough, but if you want it to reach its full potential, leave it be. Under the right conditions, this plant can become a truly beautiful green drapery. In the wild, it seems to like moist, well drained and cooler soils. It seems adaptable to a wide range of

habitat with the exception of dry and hot. **Slow growth rate.** [Link](#)

WETTER AREAS – many of the above will do well in moist areas as long as there isn't a swamp (especially with our persistent dry spells). The ones below especially prefer wetter.

OVERSTORY TREES

- **Bald Cypress *Taxodium distichum*** 50-70', full-part sun, wet. This stately conifer, native to the Midwest, is often found in groupings in parks and larger spaces, along streets, and around lakes. Unlike most cone-bearing trees, bald-cypress loses its needles each winter and grows a new set in spring. The russet-red fall color of its lacy needles is one of its outstanding characteristics. Hardy and tough, this tree will adapt to a wide range of soil types, whether wet, dry, or swampy. [Link](#)
- **Hackberry** 40-60' sun-part sun. Hackberry is a Chicago-area native and a sturdy, tolerant shade tree for parkways, parks, and other large areas. Its fleshy, purple-brown berries ripen in late summer and can persist through winter. The persistent fruits attract many birds that also find the tree to be a suitable nesting site. This has berries, but they do not create much of a mess. Birds usually eat them pretty quickly. [Link](#)
 - **Sugarberry, Southern Hackberry, *Celtis laevigata*** sun-shade, 40-60', moist-wet. Native to southern Illinois, sugarberry is closely related to a more northern species, common hackberry. Sugarberry has fewer problems with leaf galls and witch's broom. The bark is also smoother and less warty than that of common hackberry. [Link](#)
- **Oaks**
 - **Shingle Oak** 50-60', sun-part sun. likes moist soil, tolerates dry, drought and wet. Ok in clay. Leaves are ovate with no lobes. [Link](#)
 - **Shumard's Oak** [Link](#)
 - **Swamp White Oak** 3-4' at planting; 50-60' at maturity. Sun. Prefers moist well drained soil, but tolerates clay, flooding, salt and dry periods. Swamp white oak is a striking tree with attractive peeling bark, especially on young trees. The lustrous, lobed leaves have a two-tone appearance, dark green on top with a silvery-white underside. Fall color is an orange-gold to yellow in mid-autumn. An excellent shade tree for any landscape. [Link](#)
- **Sweet Gum** 60-75' sun. prefers wet soil. Sweet-gum is known for its unique star-shaped leaves with outstanding yellow, red, and purple fall color. It can be an excellent shade tree in the right location [Link](#)
- **Tamarack, Larch (*Larix laricina*)** 40-80' sun, wet. Conifer. Tamarack is a beautiful native conifer that loses its needles in fall. It is native to the Chicago region, but is on the list of threatened plants for the state of Illinois. It is commonly found in wet, swampy or boggy locations, but can grow in other locations as long as soil moisture is consistent. This tree looks good through many seasons. In spring, small rosy pink cones can be seen as new needles begin to emerge. In summer, the soft green needles give the tree a

fine texture. In autumn, the needles turn yellow before they fall. [Link](#)

- **Yellow Buckeye *Aesculus flava***, 60-80' full-part sun, moist. Buckeyes are known for their flower displays in May, and yellow buckeyes are no exception. This Illinois native produces yellow flowers in upright clusters measuring up to 6 inches tall. In fall, the leaves display a yellow-orange color. It is susceptible to leaf blotch and may be difficult to find in nurseries. [Link](#)
- **Yellow birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*)** 60-75', sun-part sun. moist. Yellow birch, an Illinois native, has a silvery bronze bark that peels into small strips. Fall color is yellow. This species shows some resistance to **bronze birch borer**. It is also known as *Betula lutea*. [Link](#)
- **Black Willow, *Salix nigra*** sun-part sun, moist-wet. [Link](#)

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UNDERSTORY TREE

- **American Hornbeam, *Carpinus Caroliniana***, 25-40' sun-shade, moist-wet. The American hornbeam is a native forest understory tree in the Chicago area, making it useful for shady landscapes and naturalized or woodland gardens. New leaves emerge reddish purple, changing to dark green, then turn yellow to orange-red in the fall, offering a kaleidoscope of color throughout the year. Even in winter, the tree's fluted blue-gray bark with long, sinewy ridges make it a special addition to the landscape. [Link](#)
- **Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*)**, 30' sun-shade, moist. is quite lovely in spring, with its tall clusters of red flowers. Red buckeye is a small tree, able to be planted under power lines. [Link](#)
- **Sweetbay Magnolia, *Magnolia Virginiana***. 20' full-part sun, moist areas. Sweetbay magnolia is a late-blooming tree native to the eastern United States. It has fragrant, creamy white flowers and glossy, dark green leaves with silvery undersides. This small tree is an excellent choice near patios, wood edges, and shrub borders. It is also tolerant of wet sites, such as pond edges and low areas in a landscape. [Link](#)
- **Winterberry *Ilex verticillata*** 5-8' sun-part sun, average-wet. The bright red persistent fruits of common winterberry glow in the winter landscape. This deciduous species of holly, native to the eastern US and Canada, is a dense multi-branched shrub. The summer foliage is glossy dark green turning yellow in fall. [Link](#)

FLOWERING TREES – SUN AND SHADE

OVERSTORY TREE

- **Black Cherry 50-60' full sun.** Black Cherry is one of the few large trees that has highly visible white flowers in the spring. It is a very fast growing tree at 30-36 inches per year. It produces an abundance of fruit which birds relish. Black Cherry should not be planted over a patio or sidewalk due to messy fruit. This tree can be easily identified by its bark, which resembles potato chips! Requires full sun and good garden soil. [Link](#)
- **Catalpa** Catalpa is a Midwest native tree that grows 40 to 60 feet tall, with a narrow, open, irregularly rounded crown and spreading branches. It has large, heart-shaped leaves and large clusters of fragrant, white flowers. The long, interesting seed pods persist through the winter. [Link](#)
- **Tulip Tree 70-90', full-part sun, moist.** The tuliptree is one of the largest native trees in North America. It is a member of the magnolia family and has distinct tulip shaped flowers. The showy, goblet shaped, orange-yellow-green flowers appear in late spring after the leaves form. The cone-like seed clusters sit upright on the branches. The golden-yellow fall color of the tuliptree makes this an excellent choice for large landscapes. [Link](#)
- **Yellow Buckeye 60-80' full-part sun.** Buckeyes are known for their flower displays in May, and yellow buckeyes are no exception. This Illinois native produces yellow flowers in upright clusters measuring up to 6 inches tall. In fall, the leaves display a yellow-orange color. [Link](#)
- **Yellowwood 30 to 50', full sun, moist, drained soil.** A medium- to large-sized tree with smooth bark, large hanging clusters of fragrant white flowers, and clear yellow fall color. Choose a yellowwood tree for excellent shade in a small to medium sized landscape. [Link](#)

FLOWERING TREES

UNDERSTORY – SUN or PART SUN

- **Redbud 15-35'** In April and May, many neighborhoods are brightened by the purplish-pink flowers lining the dark branches of redbuds before their leaves open. This Chicago-area native plant evolved in the understory and along the edges of forests. It works especially well among evergreens that contrast with its color and shelter it from intense sunlight. Yellow leaf color in fall. [Link](#)
- **Serviceberry** like Downy Serviceberry (*amelanchier arborea*) 10-30' or *Amelanchier laevis* 15-25' or *Amelanchier canadensis* Shadblow serviceberry *Amelanchier canadensis* or shadblow serviceberry, is a deciduous, early-flowering, large shrub or small tree. Shadblow has slightly fragrant, white flowers in drooping clusters which appear before the leaves emerge in early spring and produce edible berries. [Link](#)
- **Prairie Crabapple** This small tree is about 10-25' tall that has a short trunk up to 1' across and a broad spreading crown. The value of Prairie Crab Apple to various kinds of wildlife is quite high. The nectar and pollen of the large flowers attract honeybees,

bumblebees, and other long-tongued bees; they are probably the primary agents of cross-pollination. Other visitors of the flowers include smaller bees, butterflies, and skippers. A variety of insects feed destructively on the foliage, fruit, flowers, wood, and plant juices of crab apples and apples (*Malus spp.*), including Prairie Crab Apple. [Link](#)

- **Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*)**, 30' sun-shade, moist. is quite lovely in spring, with its tall clusters of red flowers. Red buckeye is a small tree, able to be planted under power lines. [Link](#)
- **Sweetbay Magnolia, *Magnolia virginiana***. 20' full-part sun, moist areas. Sweetbay magnolia is a late-blooming tree native to the eastern United States. It has fragrant, creamy white flowers and glossy, dark green leaves with silvery undersides. This small tree is an excellent choice near patios, wood edges, and shrub borders. It is also tolerant of wet sites, such as pond edges and low areas in a landscape. [Link](#)
- **Wild Plum** To 35', sun-shade, moist, spring blooms. Wild plum, also called American plum is a small, fast-growing, short-lived, colony-forming native tree, commonly found along fencerows, open fields, and roadsides. Abundant tiny white flowers open before the leaves emerge in spring. Plums appear in late summer. [Link](#)

FLOWERING TREES (SHADE)

- **Sweetbay Magnolia, *Magnolia Virginiana***. 20' full-part sun, moist areas. Sweetbay magnolia is a late-blooming tree native to the eastern United States. It has fragrant, creamy white flowers and glossy, dark green leaves with silvery undersides. This small tree is an excellent choice near patios, wood edges, and shrub borders. It is also tolerant of wet sites, such as pond edges and low areas in a landscape. [Link](#)
- **Witchhazel** 15' Common witch-hazel is a large shrub with a picturesque irregular branching habit that naturally grows along woodland edges. The large, rounded, dark green leaves often hang onto the winter branches. The yellow strap-like flowers of this native shrub are among the last blooms to appear in fall, but are often hidden by the leaves. The fruit capsules mature a year after flowering, splitting open to expel seeds that are attractive to birds. Tolerant of road salt and clay soil. This is a great specimen plant or in a naturalized landscape. [Link](#)

SHRUBS: SHORT – MID HEIGHT (SUN-PART SUN)

- **Black Chokeberry** - 3-5' Blooms spring, good fall color. [Link](#)
- **Blueberry** 2' sun-shade Don't let the small size and wispy branches fool you, this plant is one tough shrub. The sites we find this on in the wild range from rock cliffs to sand dunes to well-drained woods with light soils, giving it a wide but limited range throughout Illinois. The blueberries that are produced are a bit small, but there are lots of them. They start appearing in June. Birds are attracted to the berries plus many small bees and other insects are attracted to the flowers and leaves making this plant a

tiny habitat. Acidic Ph 4.5-5.5 [Link](#)

- **Carolina Allspice Calycanthus Floridus** 6' sun-part sun, dry-moist. Fragrant. In mid May, the flowers are maroon with a delightful fresh strawberry fragrance, which is strongest in the evening. Flowers and leaves have been used as sweet smelling potpourri and placed in drawers among clothes. [Link](#)
- **Carolina Rose** 3-4' *Rosa Carolina* has prickles, but roses are beautiful. Tends to spread and pop up by rhizomes. [Link](#)
- **Coralberry** 3-5' Coralberry (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*) is a low-growing, spreading shrub with arching stems that produce clusters of purplish red fruits in the fall. It is a good food source for several species of birds. Coralberry is part of the oak savanna where it creates low, dense thickets in dry areas that are in full sun or light shade. This plant is native further south. The white flowers are flushed with pink and bloom in early spring, but they are not particularly showy. However, the pea size fruit form large clusters of bright purple and persist through winter. Birds eat the fruit before spring. In the plant world there are very few plants like Coralberry that can grow 3 feet tall and handle dry spots in shade. The other plant is *Diervilla*, and both plants are part of the *Caprifoliaceae* (Honeysuckle) Family. We have also found that Coralberry hosts a beautiful little sphinx butterfly. [Link](#)
- **Fragrant Sumac** 3-5' Fragrant sumac is a low growing shrub forming a thick, dense mass of stems. Used en masse as a ground cover, it is an excellent shrub for stabilizing banks and slopes. The glossy, blue-green leaves emit a lemon scent when crushed and turn a mixture of red, burgundy, and purple in the fall. [Link](#)
- **Maple Leaved Viburnum** 3-5' Maple-leaved viburnum is a native, medium-sized understory shrub, preferring shade and part shade conditions. It makes it a great option for naturalizing in shady areas. The creamy-white, flat-topped flowers in May, black fruit in fall that persists into winter, and excellent pink to dark burgundy fall color add year-round interest. [Link](#)
- **New Jersey Tea** 1-2' One of a few true prairie shrubs left in Illinois, found almost exclusively in prairie remnants and open savannas. Its white flowers brighten the grassy expanses from late June to early August and can really bring in the pollinators. Needs full sun and well drained soils to get best results in growth. Wet ground is not recommended. Though not a legume, it does fix nitrogen in nodules in the roots, adding nutrients to the soil. New Jersey Tea can be used as a fine tea, by using the leaves and flowers. In the past, it was also used to make a red dye, which was made by crushing the roots. We recommend that you add wire protection from rabbits and others for the first year. [Link](#)
- **Snowberry** 3-5' Snowberry is a native shrub commonly used en masse or in naturalized landscapes. Thin, cascading branches produce small, pink flowers that appear in spikes in early summer followed by clusters of white berries in autumn. [Link](#)
- **Wild Hydrangea** 5'. Wild hydrangea is a hardy, adaptable shrub grown for its large, cloud like clusters of early summer flowers that start out pale green and turn to white then eventually fade to brown adding winter interest to the landscape. Since it flowers on the tips of the new growth its flower buds are not diminished by harsh winters. It is

native to woodlands in the eastern U.S. not as showy as cultivar hydrangea, but the blooms are fertile with lots of nectar (vs the cultivars) [Link](#)

SHRUBS: SHORT-MID HEIGHT (SHADE)

- **Dwarf Bush Honeysuckle** 1-3' shade. Has a nice yellow flower and it does spread to fill in shade. [Link](#)
- **Blue Indigo** 4' full-part. Medium moisture. Their 4' height and branching habit make wide spacing advisable in home landscaping. [Link](#)
- **Coralberry** 3-5' Coralberry (*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*) is a low-growing, spreading shrub with arching stems that produce clusters of purplish red fruits in the fall. It is a good food source for several species of birds. Coralberry is part of the oak savanna where it creates low, dense thickets in dry areas that are in full sun or light shade. This plant is native further south. The white flowers are flushed with pink and bloom in early spring, but they are not particularly showy. However, the pea size fruit form large clusters of bright purple and persist through winter. Birds eat the fruit before spring. In the plant world there are very few plants like Coralberry that can grow 3 feet tall and handle dry spots in shade. The other plant is Diervilla, and both plants are part of the Caprifoliaceae (Honeysuckle) Family. We have also found that Coralberry hosts a beautiful little sphinx butterfly. [Link](#)
- **Cream Wild Indigo** 2', full-part, medium dry. is among the earliest prairie species to bloom. The cream to light yellow flowers are very showy and will turn into inconspicuous light green seed pods (see images) which then turn to blue-black in the fall. [Link](#)
- **Shrubby St. Johnswort** (*Hypericum prolificum*). **Shrubby St. John's wort** 3-5' full-part sun, moist, well-drained, is a low to medium-sized native shrub reaching 3 to 4 feet high. The bright yellow flowers with a profusion of yellow stamens look like fireworks. The exfoliating bark and attractive seed capsules add winter interest to the landscape. Can be pruned back to the ground every few years if a lower height is desired), these shrubs will spread from their root system. Plant them next to driveways, paths, or mowed lawn to keep their horizontal growth in check. [Link](#)
- **Snowberry** 3-5' Snowberry is a native shrub commonly used en masse or in naturalized landscapes. Thin, cascading branches produce small, pink flowers that appear in spikes in early summer followed by clusters of white berries in autumn. [Link](#)
- **Spikenard** 3-5', sun-part sun. prefers part sun, moist. *Aralia racemosa*, commonly called American spikenard, is a rhizomatous, shrubby-looking, soft-stemmed, herbaceous perennial of the Ginseng family that is native to moist rich woods. Can spread over time. [Link](#)
- **White Wild Indigo** 4' full-part. Dry ok. A quick grower in spring, White Wild Indigo has striking charcoal-gray stems, blue-green leaves and pea-like blossoms forming on long spikes, making it quite showy, but without floral scent. [Link](#)

- **Wild Hydrangea** 5'. Wild hydrangea is a hardy, adaptable shrub grown for its large, cloud like clusters of early summer flowers that start out pale green and turn to white then eventually fade to brown adding winter interest to the landscape. Since it flowers on the tips of the new growth its flower buds are not diminished by harsh winters. It is native to woodlands in the eastern U.S. not as showy as cultivar hydrangea, but the blooms are fertile with lots of nectar (vs the cultivars) [Link](#)

SHRUBS: TALLER (SUN-PART SUN)

- **Blackhaw Viburnum** 10' sun-shade. Black-haw viburnum is a large, native shrub or a small tree. In spring, new leaves emerge copper-colored followed by white, flat-topped flowers. In fall, black fruits contrast with the pinkish-red foliage. A great plant for naturalized areas. Can take some shade. [Link](#)
- **Elderberry** 8'+ sun. Common elderberry is a large, multi-stemmed, native shrub with showy white flower clusters in mid-summer, followed by juicy, blue-black fruits. Plants are coarse and best used for naturalizing or as a back-of-the-border hedge. [Link](#)
- **Hazelnuts** Needs sun. This is what it looks like when their nuts are developing - closest they have to a bloom. They have good yellow fall color. Need at least 2 for better fruiting. [Link](#)
- **Nannyberry** 15-20'. Sun-part sun. Nannyberry is grown as a large shrub or a small tree reaching 15 to 20 feet high. Known for its dark, lustrous green leaves which turn maroon-red in the fall. This Midwest native is typically found in woodlands and wood edges, a great plant for naturalizing. [Link](#)
- **Ninebark**, sun-part sun. do well with only a little sun, and they get to be 8' tall. They have white blooms and turn to seed - not really so much like fruit. [Link](#)
- **Prairie willow**. 6' sun. 8' wide. Prairie Willow is a dwarf willow that can be found in a range of habitats throughout Illinois. It is unique among willows of our area in that it can tolerate **drier growing conditions as well as moist sites**. This plant is a classic savanna shrub, forming colonies in ideal conditions. As a keystone species, it attracts a number of pollinators in the spring and hosts a range of butterflies. [Link](#)
- **Pussy Willow** 8'+ sun. Prefers wetter. In early spring, the silky, furry catkins open before the leaves appear to signal spring is on the way. [Link](#)
- **Red Osier Dogwood** 7-9'. Sun. Red-osier dogwood is a large, 7 to 9 foot, erect shrub. The shrubs can be used in front of evergreens that will show off the dark red winter stems. Besides attractive, red stems in the winter, red-osier dogwood has yellowish-white flowers that appear in late May to early June, and bluish-white fruit borne in late summer. Fall color is reddish-purple. [Link](#)
- **Spicebush** 8'+ part sun-shade. Spicebush, named for its spicy, fragrant leaves and stems, is native to moist woodlands in the Midwest and occasionally found in the Chicago area. It is most often used in shrub borders and naturalizing area landscaping. Bright red fruits ripen from July through October on female plants, but are only showy once the foliage falls off. High in fat content in the berries are quickly eaten by various

species of birds. Gender specific, get 2-3 to try for mixed sexes. [Link](#)

- **Wafer Ash** 15' part sun-shade. Wafer-ash is a small native tree or large shrub in the CITRUS (!) family. It produces small fragrant flowers and wafer-like winged seeds, similar to elms. It is a good plant for naturalizing or woodland landscapes. Despite the name, this tree is not a true ash tree and is unaffected by the emerald ash borer. [Link](#)
- **Wahoo** 8-10', sun-part sun. The native version of burning bush. Wahoo is a native small tree or large shrub found as an understory plant in rich woods and along stream banks. It is a colony-forming plant. It has small, purple hanging flowers in spring, beautiful fall color and 4-capsuled fruit in fall. [Link](#)
- **Witchhazel** 15' Part sun-shade. Common witch-hazel is a large shrub with a picturesque irregular branching habit that naturally grows along woodland edges. The large, rounded, dark green leaves often hang onto the winter branches. The yellow strap-like flowers of this native shrub are among the last blooms to appear in fall, but are often hidden by the leaves. The fruit capsules mature a year after flowering, splitting open to expel seeds that are attractive to birds. Tolerant of road salt and clay soil. This is a great specimen plant or in a naturalized landscape. [Link](#)

SHRUBS: MID-HEIGHT WETTER – most of the above are ok with wet periods. These prefer wet.

- **Black Chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*)** Black chokeberry, 3-6' full-part sun, moist is a dependable small to medium sized shrub with an upright, mounded habit. Small clusters of white flowers in spring are followed by glossy black fruit. The dark green foliage turns reddish-purple in the fall. Can be pruned back to the ground every few years if a lower height is desired), these shrubs will spread from their root system. Plant them next to driveways, paths, or mowed lawn to keep their horizontal growth in check. [Link](#)
- **Buttonbush** 5' wet, sun-part sun. Buttonbush is a great shrub for naturalizing in wet areas and attracts butterflies. It has glossy green leaves and fragrant, round flower clusters during mid-summer. Native to the Chicago area and the eastern United States, buttonbush attracts more than 24 species of birds, as well as numerous species of butterflies. [Link](#)
- **American Currant** 3-5' *ribes americanum* Fast-growing shrub with arching stems. Drooping yellow flowers mature into sweet-tart, edible fruit. Red fall foliage. American black currant is a thornless, erect native shrub with showy yellow flowers in early spring followed by edible black berries in mid-summer. It is an excellent choice for moist, shady sites. [Link](#)
- **Elderberry** 8'+ Common elderberry is a large, multi-stemmed, native shrub with showy white flower clusters in mid-summer, followed by juicy, blue-black fruits. Plants are coarse and best used for naturalizing or as a back-of-the-border hedge. For shadier locations, there is red elderberry. Black elderberry at Coldstream here. [Link](#)
- **Strawberry-Bush *Euonymus (Euonymus americanus)*** 4-6' average-wet, sun-shade. open, suckering shrub reaching 4 to 6 feet high. It is often found in low,

moist wooded landscapes and swampy areas. All parts of the shrub are green. The fruit resembles a strawberry. It may be difficult to find in nurseries. Like our other native burning bushes, the fall color is very nice, tending to be red or rose, lasting far longer than the non-native counterparts. Plant it where the site conditions are somewhat protected from the harsher aspects of the northern Illinois winters, and it should preform nicely as a garden shrub with interest. [Link](#)

- **Prairie Willow** 4-6' sun, moist-well drained soil. Prairie willow is a dwarf, shrubby willow reaching 4 to 6 feet high, but can grow as high as 10 feet with branches reaching low to the ground. Often found in upland open prairies, along roadsides, and disturbed sandy soil. One of the first shrubs to flower in the spring before the leaves emerge. [Link](#)
- **Pussy Willow** 8'-20' sun, moist well drained soil. Important for pollinators and other insects, fast-growing, native tree or large shrub with a rounded crown. In early spring, the silky, furry catkins open before the leaves appear to signal spring is on the way. [Link](#)

HELPFUL REFERENCES

- [Morton Arboretum search trees & plants](#)
- [Healthy HEDGES](#)
- [NATIVE TREES, SHRUBS for pollinators](#)
- [SELECTING AND PLANTING TREES: Morton Arboretum](#)
- [SALT TOLERANT: Trees, Shrubs and Plants](#)