

Alternative Plants for Invasive Species

Table 1 identifies a selection of alternative plants, trees and shrubs (categories A to M) that can be used in place of invasive species. Table 2 identifies those invasive species commonly used in gardens or landscaping, the corresponding alternative plant category, as well as some additional alternatives.

Note: When choosing plants, native plants are always the best choice as they are better adapted locally to our climate and soil conditions and have many more benefits for native wildlife. If your property is adjacent to or contains a natural feature such as a forest, wetland or valley, CVC strongly recommends the use of common native plants only. Common native plants are required when CVC issues a permit for approval (for a building permit or development application) within a regulated area. Plants that are non-native and non-invasive provide limited benefits to biodiversity but are included here as an alternative for home gardens. Be aware also of native plant cultivars and avoid their use. Cultivars often do not offer the same benefits as the original plant and may even diminish the native populations through hybridization.

LEGEND

Alternative Plant Selection Score

Plants that promote biodiversity:

- ★★★ – Best choice – Common native plant within CVC watershed
- ★★ – Good choice – Plant is native to Ontario

Plants that may or may not have benefits to biodiversity:

- ★ – Fair choice – Non-native plant that is non-invasive

Generalized Light Requirements

- F – Full sun
- S – Shade to part shade
- E – Either sun or shade

Wetland Plants

- W – Wetland plant
- W* – Wetland plant, but can be planted in drier areas

TABLE 1 - Alternative Plants

SCORE	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	KEY	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	KEY
A – Shrubs						
★★★	<i>Alnus incana ssp. rugosa</i>	Speckled alder	F, W *	<i>Salix eriocephala</i>	Heartleaf willow	F, W *
	<i>Cornus rugosa</i>	Round leaved dogwood	E	<i>Salix petiolaris</i>	Slender willow	F, W
	<i>Cornus sericea</i>	Red osier dogwood	E, W *	<i>Sambucus canadensis</i>	Common elderberry	E
	<i>Diervilla lonicera</i>	Bush honeysuckle	E	<i>Sambucus racemosa ssp. pubens</i>	Red elderberry	E
	<i>Salix bebbiana</i>	Bebb's willow	F, W *	<i>Lonicera canadensis</i>	Canada fly honeysuckle	E
	<i>Salix discolor</i>	Pussy willow	F, W *	<i>Viburnum lentago</i>	Nannyberry	E
★★	<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Juneberry	E	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	Winterberry	E, W *
	<i>Amelanchier stolonifera</i>	Running serviceberry	F	<i>Prunus nigra</i>	Canada plum	F
	<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	Buttonbush	F, W	<i>Rhamnus alnifolia</i>	Alder-leaved buckthorn	E, W
	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Eastern redbud	F	<i>Shepherdia canadensis</i>	Canada buffaloberry	F
	<i>Dirca palustris</i>	Leatherwood	S	<i>Viburnum recognitum</i>	Arrowwood	S
	<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	Witch hazel	S			
★	<i>Alnus serrulata</i>	Hazel alder	E	<i>Lonicera involucrata</i>	Twinberry honeysuckle	E
	<i>Calycanthus floridus</i>	Sweetshrub	E	<i>Salix sericea</i>	Silky willow	E
	<i>Fothergilla major</i>	Witch alder	F	<i>Shepherdia argentea</i>	Silver buffaloberry	S
	<i>Heptacodium miconioides</i>	Seven sons tree	F	<i>Stephanandra incisa</i>	Stephanandra	E
	<i>Kolkwitzia amabilis</i>	Beautybush	F			
B – Tall Trees						
★★★	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	Red maple	E, W *	<i>Fraxinus americana</i>	White ash	E
	<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	Silver maple	E	<i>Populus grandidentata</i>	Large-toothed aspen	E
	<i>Acer saccharum ssp. saccharum</i>	Sugar maple	E	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Trembling aspen	E
	<i>Acer x freemanii</i>	Freeman's maple	E, W *	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	Bur oak	F
	<i>Betula papyrifera</i>	White birch	E	<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Red oak	F
★★	<i>Aesculus glabra</i>	Ohio buckeye	E	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tulip tree	F
	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>	Hackberry	F	<i>Quercus palustris</i>	Pin oak	F
	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	Honey locust	E			
★	<i>Betula nigra</i>	River birch	F	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	European beech	F
C – Small Trees						
★★★	<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	Downy serviceberry	E	<i>Prunus pensylvanica</i>	Pin cherry	F
	<i>Amelanchier laevis</i>	Alleghanny serviceberry	E			
★	<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	Ginkgo	E	<i>Magnolia spp</i>	Magnolia species	F

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SCORE	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	KEY	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	KEY
D – Ground Covers						
★★★	<i>Asarum canadense</i>	Wild ginger	S	<i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i>	Bloodroot	S
	<i>Aster macrophyllus</i>	Large-leaved aster	S	<i>Viola sororia</i>	Common blue violet	E
	<i>Fragaria virginiana</i>	Wild strawberry	E	<i>Waldsteinia fragarioides</i>	Barren strawberry	S
	<i>Maianthemum canadense</i>	Canada mayflower	S			
★★	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Bearberry	F	<i>Mitchella repens</i>	Partridgeberry	S
	<i>Cornus canadensis</i>	Bunchberry	S			
★	<i>Asarum europaeum</i>	European wild ginger	E	<i>Epimedium spp</i>	Barrenwort	E
	<i>Heuchera micrantha</i>	'Palace purple' coral bells	E	<i>Chrysogonum virginianum</i>	Green and gold	E
E – Woody Vines						
★★★	<i>Clematis virginiana</i>	Virgin's bower	E			
★★	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	Virginia creeper	E			
★	<i>Bignonia capreolata</i>	Crossvine	E	<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>	Trumpet honeysuckle	F
	<i>Hydrangea anomala ssp. petiolaris</i>	Climbing hydrangea	E	<i>Wisteria frutescens</i>	American wisteria	F
F – Floating-Leaved Aquatic Plants						
★★	<i>Nuphar variegata</i>	Bull-head pond lily	F	<i>Potamogeton amplifolius</i>	Large-leaf pondweed	F
	<i>Nymphaea odorata</i>	White water-lily	F	<i>Potamogeton natans</i>	Floating pondweed	F
	<i>Polygonum amphibium</i>	Water smartweed	F			
G – Marginal Emergent Wetland Plants						
★★★	<i>Iris versicolor</i>	Blue flag iris	F	<i>Mimulus ssp.</i>	Monkey-flower species	F, W *
	<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>	Great blue lobelia	F, W *			
★★	<i>Acorus americanus</i>	Sweetflag	F	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	Cardinal flower	E, W *
	<i>Calla palustris</i>	Water arum	E	<i>Physostegia virginiana ssp. virginiana</i>	False dragonhead	F, W *
	<i>Cypripedium reginae</i>	Showy lady's slipper	E	<i>Pontederia cordata</i>	Pickerelweed	F
H – Marginal Emergent Wetland Grasses and Rushes						
★★★	<i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>	Canada blue-joint	F	<i>Glyceria grandis</i>	Tall manna grass	F
	<i>Carex lacustris</i>	Lake sedge	E	<i>Scirpus spp.</i>	Bulrush species	F
	<i>Carex pseudo-cyperus</i>	Cypres-like sedge	E			
★★	<i>Bolboschoenus fluviatilis</i>	River bulrush	F	<i>Glyceria canadensis</i>	Rattlesnake mannagrass	E
	<i>Equisetum palustre</i>	Marsh horsetail	E	<i>Schoenoplectus pungens</i>	Threesquare bulrush	F
I – Submerged Aquatic Plants						
★★	<i>Elodea canadensis</i>	Canada waterweed	E	<i>Myriophyllum sibiricum</i>	Common water milfoil	E
	<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>	Coontail	F			
J – Tall Flowering Plants						
★★★	<i>Symphotrichum lanceolatum ssp. lanceolatum</i>	White panicle aster	F	<i>Symphotrichum lateriflorum var. lateriflorum</i>	Calico aster	S
	<i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i>	New England aster	F			
★★	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	Butterfly milkweed	F	<i>Lespedeza capitata</i>	Round-head bush clover	F
	<i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i>	False sunflower	F	<i>Silphium perfoliatum</i>	Cup plant	E
★	<i>Kirengeshoma palmata</i>	Yellow wax-bells	S	<i>Phlox paniculata</i>	Garden phlox	F
	<i>Phlox carolina</i>	Carolina phlox	F			
K – Tall Flowering Plants (Moist or Fresh Soils)						
★★★	<i>Chelone glabra</i>	Turtlehead	F	<i>Symphotrichum puniceum</i>	Purple-stem aster	E
	<i>Impatiens capensis</i>	Spotted touch-me-not	E	<i>Verbena hastata</i>	Blue vervain	F
★★	<i>Lilium michiganense</i>	Michigan lily	E			
★	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Hairy willow-herb	F			

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L – Low to Mid-Height Flowering Plants						
★★★★	<i>Eurybia macrophylla</i>	Large-leaved aster	E	<i>Maianthemum stellatum</i>	Starry false Solomon's seal	E
	<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	Wild geranium	E	<i>Mimulus spp.</i>	Monkey-flower species	F, W *
	<i>Maianthemum racemosum</i> ssp. <i>racemosum</i>	False Solomon's seal	S	<i>Symphotrichum cordifolium</i>	Heart-leaved aster	S
★★	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	Cardinal flower	E, W *	<i>Verbena stricta</i>	Hoary vervain	F
	<i>Mertensia virginica</i>	Virginia bluebells	S			
M – Tall Grasses (Fresh to Dry Soils)						
★★★★	<i>Muhlenbergia mexicana</i>	Mexican muhly	E			
★★	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>	Big blue-stem	F	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>	Indian grass	F
	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	Switch grass	F			
★	<i>Calamagrostis x acutiflora</i> Karl Foerster	Karl Foerster feather reed grass	F	<i>Helictotrichon sempervirens</i>	Blue Oat Grass	F

This table identifies some common invasive species, and some good alternatives to each.

TABLE 2 - Invasive Species					
INVASIVE SPECIES		ALTERNATIVE PLANT CATEGORY	ADDITIONAL ALTERNATIVES		
SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME		SCORE	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Acer ginnala</i>	Amur maple	A			
<i>Acer negundo</i>	Manitoba maple	B			
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	Norway maple	B	★	<i>Acer miyabei</i>	Miyabe maple
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore maple	B			
<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>	Goutweed	D			
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	Horse-chestnut	B			
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree-of-heaven	B	★★★★	<i>Juglans nigra</i>	Black walnut
<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Creeping bugleweed	D			
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Black alder	A			
<i>Alnus incana</i> sp. <i>incana</i>	European white alder	A or C			
<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	Japanese barberry	A	★★★★	<i>Crataegus punctata</i>	Dotted hawthorn
			★★	<i>Crataegus pedicellata</i>	Scarlet hawthorn
				<i>Crataegus corusca</i>	Shining branch hawthorn
			★	<i>Cotinus coggyria</i>	
				<i>Weigela florida</i>	
<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	Common barberry	A	★★★★	<i>Crataegus punctata</i>	Dotted hawthorn
			★★	<i>Crataegus pedicellata</i>	Scarlet hawthorn
				<i>Crataegus corusca</i>	Shining branch hawthorn
			★	<i>Buxus spp.</i>	Boxwood species
				<i>Ribes alpinum</i>	
<i>Betula pendula</i>	European birch	B	★★★★	<i>Betula papyrifera</i>	White birch
<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>	Flowering rush	G or H			
<i>Celastrus orbiculatus</i>	Oriental bittersweet	E			
<i>Convallaria majalis</i>	Lily-of-the-valley	D			
<i>Cornus alba</i>	Tatarian dogwood	A			
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Singleseed hawthorn	A	★★★★	<i>Crataegus punctata</i>	Dotted hawthorn
			★★	<i>Crataegus pedicellata</i>	Scarlet hawthorn
				<i>Crataegus corusca</i>	Shining branch hawthorn
<i>Daphne mezereum</i>	Mezer's Daphne	A			
<i>Egeria densa</i>	Waterweed	I			
<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	Russian olive	A	★★	<i>Hudsonia tomentosa</i>	Sand heather
<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	Autumn olive	A	★★★★	<i>Crataegus punctata</i>	Dotted hawthorn
			★★	<i>Crataegus pedicellata</i>	Scarlet hawthorn
				<i>Crataegus corusca</i>	Shining branch hawthorn
				<i>Hudsonia tomentosa</i>	Sand heather

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SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME			SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Eleutherococcus sieboldianus</i>	Five-leaved aralia	A			
<i>Euonymus alata</i>	Winged euonymus	A	★	<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i> <i>Euonymus americanus</i> <i>Acer palmatum</i>	
<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Spindle-tree	A			
<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>	Wintercreeper euonymus	D			
<i>Forsythia suspensa</i>	Weeping forsythia	A			
<i>Forsythia viridissima</i>	Forsythia	A			
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	European ash	B			
<i>Galium mollugo</i>	White bedstraw	D	★★★	<i>Galium asprellum</i>	Rough bedstraw
				<i>Galium triflorum</i>	Fragrant bedstraw
			★★	<i>Galium circaezans</i>	Licorice bedstraw
<i>Galium verum</i>	Yellow bedstraw	D			
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Ground ivy	D			
<i>Glyceria maxima</i>	Rough manna grass	H			
<i>Hedera helix</i>	English ivy	D or E			
<i>Hemerocallis ssp.</i>	Day lily	J or K			
<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	Giant hogweed	J or K	★	<i>Rodgersia spp.</i> <i>Rheum palmatum</i>	Rodgersia Chinese rhubarb
			★	<i>Phlox carolina</i> <i>Phlox paniculata</i>	Carolina phlox Garden phlox
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Dames rocket	J or K			
<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>	Hydrilla	I			
<i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>	European frog-bit	F			
<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	Himalayan balsam	K			
<i>Iris pseudoacorus</i>	Yellow flag	G or L	★	<i>Iris sibirica</i> <i>Iris tenax</i>	Siberian iris Tough-leaf iris
			★	<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>	Blackhaw
<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	Privet	A			
<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	Japanese honeysuckle	A			
<i>Lonicera maackii</i>	Amur honeysuckle	A			
<i>Lonicera morrowi</i>	Morrow's honeysuckle	A			
<i>Lonicera tatarica</i>	Tartarian honeysuckle	A			
<i>Lonicera x bella</i>	Hybrid honeysuckle	A			
<i>Lonicera xylosteum</i>	Euro. fly honeysuckle	A			
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	Purple loosestrife	G, K or L	★★★	<i>Asclepias incarnata ssp. incarnata</i> <i>Eupatorium maculatum</i> <i>Vernonia fasciculata</i>	Swamp milkweed Joe pye-weed Smooth ironweed
			★	<i>Astilbe spp.</i> <i>Agastache foeniculum</i>	Astilbe Lavender hyssop
<i>Miscanthus sacchariflorus</i>	Eulalia	H or M			
<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	Eulalia	H or M			
<i>Morus alba</i>	White mulberry	A or C			
<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>	True forget-me-not	L			
<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	Eurasian watermilfoil	I			
<i>Nymphoides peltata</i>	Floating heart	F			
<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>	Japanese spurge	D			
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	Reed canary grass	H or M	★	<i>Carex morrowii</i> <i>Sesleria autumnalis</i>	Japanese sedge Autumn moor grass
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common reed	H or M			
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scots pine		★★★	<i>Pinus strobus</i> <i>Pinus banksiana</i>	White pine Jack pine
			★	<i>Pinus nigra</i> <i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i>	Austrian pine Dawn redwood

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SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME			SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME			
<i>Polygonum cuspidatum</i>	Japanese knotweed		★★★	<i>Cornus sericea</i>	Red-osier dogwood			
				<i>Eupatorium maculatum</i>	Joe-pye weed			
				<i>Maianthemum racemosum</i>	False Solomon's seal			
						★★	<i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>	Black cohosh
							★	<i>Aruncus dioicus</i>
						<i>Actaea ramosa</i>		Snakeroot
						<i>Fargesia dracocephala</i>	Fargesia	
<i>Populus alba</i>	White poplar	B	★★★	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Trembling aspen			
				<i>Populus grandidentata</i>	Large-toothed aspen			
<i>Populus tremula</i>	European aspen	B						
<i>Populus x canadensis</i>	Carolina poplar	B	★★★	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	Trembling aspen			
				<i>Populus grandidentata</i>	Large-toothed aspen			
<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>	Curly pondweed	I						
<i>Prunus avium</i>	Bird cherry	A						
<i>Prunus mahaleb</i>	Perfumed cherry	A						
<i>Rhodotypos scandens</i>	Jetbead	A						
<i>Robinia pseudo-acacia</i>	Black locust	B						
<i>Rosa multiflora</i>	Multiflora rose		★★★	<i>Rosa blanda</i>	Smooth rose			
				<i>Spiraea alba</i>	White spirea			
			★★	<i>Rosa carolina</i>	Carolina rose			
				<i>Rosa setigera</i>	Prairie rose			
<i>Salix alba</i>	White willow	B	★★★	<i>Salix amygdaloides</i>	Peach-leaf willow			
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat willow	A						
<i>Salix fragilis</i>	Crack willow	B	★★★	<i>Salix amygdaloides</i>	Peach-leaf willow			
<i>Salix purpurea</i>	Purple willow	A						
<i>Salix x rubens</i>	Hybrid willow	B	★★★	<i>Salix amygdaloides</i>	Peach-leaf willow			
<i>Sambucus racemosa ssp. Racemosa</i>	European red elder	A						
<i>Scilla siberica</i>	Scilla		★★★	<i>Anemone acutiloba</i>	Hepatica			
				<i>Cardamine diphylla</i>	Broad-leaved toothwort			
				<i>Claytonia virginica</i>	Narrow-leaved spring beauty			
				<i>Erythronium americanum ssp. americanum</i>	Trout lily			
				<i>Hydrophyllum virginianum</i>	Virginia waterleaf			
			★★	<i>Claytonia caroliniana</i>	Broad-leaved spring beauty			
				<i>Mertensia virginica</i>	Virginia bluebells			
<i>Sorbaria sorbifolia</i>	False spiraea	A						
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	European mountain ash	C						
<i>Symphoricarpus albus var. laevigatus</i>	Western snowberry	A						
<i>Syringa vulgaris</i>	Lilac	A						
<i>Tilia cordata</i>	European linden	B	★★★	<i>Tilia americana</i>	Basswood			
<i>Trapa natans</i>	Water-chestnut	F						
<i>Typha angustifolia</i>	Narrow-leaved cattail		★★★	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Broad-leaved cattail			
<i>Typha x glauca</i>	Hybrid cattail		★★★	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Broad-leaved cattail			
<i>Ulmus glabra</i>	Scotch elm	B						
<i>Ulmus pumila</i>	Siberian elm	B	★	<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	Ginkgo			
<i>Viburnum opulus sp. opulus</i>	Guelder rose	A						
<i>Vinca minor</i>	Periwinkle	D	★★★	<i>Tiarella cordifolia</i>	Foam flower			
				<i>Tolmiea menziesii</i>	Piggyback plant			
			★	<i>Sarcococca hookeriana var. humilis</i>	Sweetbox			
				<i>Asarum europaeum</i>	European wild ginger			
<i>Viola odorata</i>	Sweet violet	L	★★★	<i>Viola canadensis</i>	Canada violet			
				<i>Viola sororia</i>	Common blue violet			
			★★	<i>Mertensia virginica</i>	Virginia bluebells			