



Residential Landscaping in a Floodplain: A Guide to Water-Tolerant Plants

Once established, these plants are suitable for damp or wet areas and are deer and rabbit resistant. Protect young plants and seedlings from animals until well established using barriers or non-toxic repellent. Plants marked with an asterisk (*) are more tolerant of very wet or periodically flooded conditions. Plants with names in **green** are native to Michigan. Sunlight requirements are noted as such: f=full sun, p=partial shade, s=shade. Click on photo credit lines to link to websites with details on each plant.

For additional water-tolerant landscaping ideas, see the Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership's Native Plant List at www.mishorelinepartnership.org (see "Between the Water Level and Ordinary High Water Mark") or use the Native Plant Browser at www.cardnonativeplantnursery.com/native-browser.

You may find these plants available for sale from area greenhouses:

Hidden Savanna Nursery, 100 N Van Kal Street, Kalamazoo, MI, 269-352-3876
www.hiddensavanna.com

Romence Gardens, 9660 Shaver Road, Portage, MI, 269-323-8310
www.romencegardencenter.com

Wedel's Nursery, Florist and Garden Center, 5020 Texas Drive, Kalamazoo, MI, 269-345-1195, www.wedels.com

Schram's Greenhouse, 7313 S Westnedge Avenue, Portage, MI, 269-327-5347

Michigan Wildflower Farm, www.michiganwildflowerfarm.com, has seeds for native wetland plant species available for purchase and information on how to successfully sow wildflower seeds.



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Thank you to Linda Whitlock of Michigan State University Extension for her expert assistance.

For more information on storm water management, flood control, or soil erosion controls, please visit www.kalcounty.com/Drain/

Deciduous trees



**Acer rubrum* – Red Maple

Sun: f/p/s
Height: 75-100 ft
Spread: 40 ft
Bloom Time: March-May
Bloom Color: Green/red
Notes: Provides food for squirrels and some birds

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



**Betula nigra* – River Birch

Sun: f/p
Height: 40-70 ft
Spread: 40-60 ft
Bloom Time: April-May
Bloom Color: Brown/green
Notes: Pink to reddish brown bark naturally peels away to reveal lighter inner bark; adapts well to heavy clay soils

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



Asimina triloba – Pawpaw

Sun: f/p
Height: 25-30 ft
Spread: 25-30 ft
Bloom Time: April-May
Bloom Color: Dark green/purple
Notes: Produces edible fruit which matures in early autumn; fruit is similar in taste and texture to bananas

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



Gleditsia triacanthos – Honey Locust

Sun: f/p
Height: 30-75 ft
Spread: 25-35 ft
Bloom Time: May-June
Bloom Color: Yellow
Notes: Used extensively by wildlife; open canopy and small leaves will not shade out turf grass or other landscape plants; has thorns

Photo credit: A. A. Reznicek, University of Michigan Herbarium



Amelanchier arborea – Serviceberry or Juneberry

Sun: f/p/s
Height: 15-25 ft
Spread: 15-25 ft
Bloom Time: April-May
Bloom Color: White
Notes: Attracts game birds and songbirds; edible berry

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder

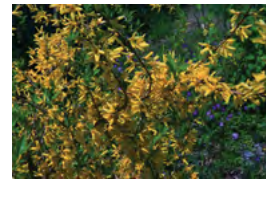
Deciduous shrubs



Aronia arbutifolia – Red Chokeberry

Sun: f/p
Height: 6-10 ft
Spread: 3-6 ft
Bloom Time: April
Bloom Color: White to light pink
Notes: Fruits are technically edible but are very tart and bitter, can be used to make jams or jellies

Photo credit: Stefan Bloodworth, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center



Forsythia species – Forsythia

Sun: f/p
Height: 6-9 ft
Spread: 6-9 ft
Bloom Time: March-April
Bloom Color: Yellow
Notes: Many varieties of cultivated forsythias available

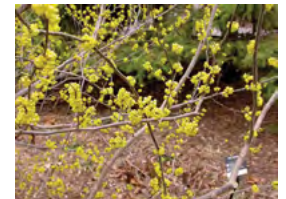
Photo credit: A. A. Reznicek, University of Michigan Herbarium



**Itea virginica* – Virginia Sweetspire

Sun: f/p
Height: 3-5 ft
Spread: 3-5 ft
Bloom Time: June-July
Bloom Color: White
Notes: Tiny, fragrant flowers in drooping racemes bloom in early summer; adaptable to shade

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



**Lindera benzoin* – Spicebush

Sun: f/p
Height: 6-12 ft
Spread: 6-12 ft
Bloom Time: March
Bloom Color: Greenish yellow
Notes: Dioecious plant, need both male and female plants to produce attractive bright red drupes on female plants.

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



Viburnum opulus – European Cranberrybush

Sun: f/p
Height: 8-15 ft
Spread: 10-15 ft
Bloom Time: April-May
Bloom Color: White
Notes: Produces cranberry-like red berries in the fall that are technically edible, but very bitter in taste and not recommended to eat raw

Photo credit: B. S. Walters, University of Michigan Herbarium

Evergreen trees and shrubs



Ilex opaca – American Holly

Sun: f/p
Height: 15-30 ft
Spread: 10-20 ft
Bloom Time: May
Bloom Color: Creamy white
Notes: Dioecious species, need to plant male and female trees to produce bright red berries that attract birds

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



Ilex verticillata – Winterberry or Michigan Holly

Sun: f/p/s
Height: 6-12 ft
Spread: 6-12 ft
Bloom Time: May-June
Bloom Color: White
Notes: Dioecious species, need to plant male and female plants to produce attractive red berries; prefers acidic soil

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder

Ornamental grasses



Carex hystericina – Porcupine or Bottlebrush Sedge

Sun: f/p/s
Height: 2-3 ft
Spread: 0.5-2 ft
Bloom Time: May-June
Bloom Color: Green
Notes: Rhizomes form dense clumps of triangular stems

Photo credit: USDI BLM, USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database



Carex stricta – Tussock Sedge

Sun: f/p
Height: 2-3 ft
Spread: 1-2 ft
Bloom Time: April-June
Bloom Color: Brown
Notes: Forms hummocks (small mounds or clumps); slow spreading with dense roots; other native Carex species that are good ground cover are Carex aquatilis (Water sedge), C. comosa (Bristly sedge), and C. lacustris (Lake sedge)

Photo credit: A. A. Reznicek, University of Michigan Herbarium



**Carex vulpinoidea* – Fox Sedge

Sun: f/p
Height: 1-3 ft
Spread: 0.5-2 ft
Bloom Time: May-July
Bloom Color: Green
Notes: Grass-like leaf blades grow in clumps; seed heads are short-lived but are attractive and resemble fox tails

Photo credit: Robert H. Mohlenbrock, hosted by the USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database



Schizachyrium scoparium – Little Bluestem

Sun: f
Height: 2-4 ft
Spread: 1.5-2 ft
Bloom Time: August
Bloom Color: Brown
Notes: Seed heads are attractive through winter; foliage is bronze-orange in fall and stem bases are lavender-blue

Photo credit: A. A. Reznicek, University of Michigan Herbarium

Perennials and bulbs



Arisaema triphyllum – Jack-in-the-Pulpit

Sun: f/p
Height: 1-2 ft
Spread: 1-1.5 ft
Bloom Time: April-May
Bloom Color: Green/purple
Notes: Showy flower; needs consistently moist soil rich in organic matter

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



**Asclepias incarnata* – Swamp Milkweed

Sun: f/p
Height: 3-5 ft
Spread: 2-3 ft
Bloom Time: June-September
Bloom Color: Pink
Notes: Attracts monarch butterflies

Photo credit: B. S. Walters, University of Michigan Herbarium



Actaea dahurica – Bugbane

Sun: p/s
Height: 3-6 ft
Spread: 2.5-3 ft
Bloom Time: August-September
Bloom Color: Creamy white
Notes: Slow to become established

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



Ligularia dentata – Leopard Plant

Sun: p/s
Height: 3-4 ft
Spread: 2-3 ft
Bloom Time: June-July
Bloom Color: Yellow
Notes: Needs consistently moist soil and shade

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



Physostegia virginiana – Obedient Plant

Sun: f
Height: 3-4 ft
Spread: 2-3 ft
Bloom Time: June-September
Bloom Color: Pink and white
Notes: Attracts hummingbirds

Photo credit: B. S. Walters, University of Michigan Herbarium



Tiarella cordifolia – Foam Flower

Sun: p/s
Height: 0.75-1 ft
Spread: 1-2 ft
Bloom Time: May
Bloom Color: White or pink
Notes: Prefers consistently moist (not wet) soils

Photo credit: R.W. Smith, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center



Tricyrtis formosana – Toad Lily

Sun: p/s
Height: 2-3 ft
Spread: 1.5-2 ft
Bloom Time: August-September
Bloom Color: White with reddish-purple spots
Notes: Needs consistently moist soil

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder

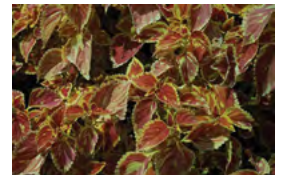
Annuals



**Mimulus ringens* – Allegheny Monkeyflower

Sun: f/p
Height: 1-3 ft
Spread: 0.75-1 ft
Bloom Time: July-September
Bloom Color: Blue
Notes: Prefers consistently moist soil

Photo credit: B. S. Walters, University of Michigan Herbarium



Solenostemon cultivars – Coleus

Sun: p/s
Height: 0.5-3 ft
Spread: 0.5-3 ft
Bloom Time: n/a
Bloom Color: Flowers not showy
Notes: Prefers consistently moist (not wet) soil; showy foliage; many varieties available

Photo credit: Courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder



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