Native Trees, Shrubs, and Groundcovers for Riparian Buffers

In the Upper Connecticut River Valley of New Hampshire and Vermont

List compiled by Connecticut River Joint Commissions

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2005

NAME	DECID/ EVERGR	HT	LIGHT PREFERENCE		SOIL PREFERENCE			WILDLIFE HABITAT & FOOD VALUE	ORNAMENTAL VALUE
			full/part shade	full sun	dry	moist	flood tolerant		
Wild lupine *Lupinus perennis*	d	1-3'		x	x	x		low	purple-blue flower spires in June; attractive foliage
Harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*	d	1'	x		x			low	delicate wildflower with blue-lavender bell shaped flowers
Jewelweed *Impatiens capensis*	d	1-3'	x	x		x	x	high – favored by hummingbirds, butterflies	orange flowers in summer; seed capsules burst when touched; juice of plant said to help defend against exposure to poison ivy
Daisy *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*	d	1-4'		x	x	x		moderate – seeds favored by finches; common nectar source for butterflies	familiar white ray flower with yellow center
Goldenrod *Solidago* spp.	d	1-5'		x	x	x		moderate – seeds eaten by finches; nectar by butterflies	many species of wildflowers in midsummer to early fall; all except silverrod are yellow
New England aster *Aster novae-angliae*	d	5'		x	x	x		high – seeds used by songbirds; attracts butterflies	late summer/fall purple flowers with yellow centers
Christmas fern *Polystichum acrostichoides*	e	1'	x			x		low	evergreen ground cover; glossy foliage
Hay-scented fern *Dennstaedtia punctilobula*	d	2'	x	x	x	x		low	fragrant light-green foliage; spreads well, forms pure stands; tolerates full sun
Bracken fern *Pteridium aquilinum*	d	2-3'	x	x	x			low	sturdy foliage; tolerates full sun
Cinnamon fern *Osmunda cinnamomea*	d	3-4'	x			x	x	low	vase-shaped clusters; handsome foliage; cinnamon colored fertile fronds
Royal fern *Osmunda regalis*	d	6'	x	x		x	x	low	handsome foliage; new crosiers edible as "fiddle heads"
Interrupted fern *Osmunda claytoniana*	d	3-4'	x			x		low	vase-shaped clusters
Sensitive fern *Onoclea sensibilis*	d	2'	x			x	x	low	fertile fronds used in dried arrangements
Cattail *Typha latifolia*	d	6'		x		x	x	high – seed heads valuable food for birds	strap shaped leaves; brown seed head is distinctive and often used in horticultural arrangements
Reed grass *Calamagrostis canadensis*	d	5'		x		x	x	moderate	attractive grass forms clumps, stabilizes soils well
Pennsylvania sedge *Carex pensylvanica*	d	2'		x	x			low	forms low turf on sunny dry soils
Tussock sedge *Carex stricta*	d	4'		x		x	x	moderate – food for sparrows, grouse, snipe, others	forms clumps or tussocks
Rattlesnake manna grass *Glyceria canadensis*	d	3'		x		x		moderate	grass with delicate and distinctive inflorescence; plant in clusters where no competition by others is likely
Rice cutgrass *Leersia oryzoides*	d	5'		x		x	x	high – food for waterfowl; cover for fish, reptiles, amphibians	attractive seed head
Tufted hair grass *Deschampsia caespitosa*	d	4'				x		moderate	attractive seed head

from *Riparian Buffers for the Connecticut River Watershed*, Connecticut River Joint Commissions, 2000

NAME	DECID/ EVERGR	MATURE HEIGHT	GROWTH RATE	LIGHT PREFERENCE		SOIL PREFERENCE			WILDLIFE HABITAT & FOOD VALUE	ORNAMENTAL VALUE	BANK STABILIZING VALUE	HARDINESS ZONE
				full/ part shade	full sun	dry	moist	flood tolerant				
Sheep laurel *Kalmia angustifolia*	semi-e	4'	slow	x	x	x	x	x	(poisonous to livestock)	very showy pink-red flowers		3
Elderberry *Sambucus canadensis*	d	12'	moderate	x	x		x	x	very high – berries an important summer food for songbirds inc. bluebirds, rose-breasted grosbeaks, pileated woodpeckers, thrushes	showy white flower clusters; blue berries; jelly and wine can be made from berries	very good	3
Sweet pepperbush *Clethra alnifolia*	d	8'	moderate	x	x		x	x	high – fruits	white flowers		4
Hazelnut *Corylus americana*	d	10'	moderate	x	x		x		high – nuts eaten by mammals, grouse, pheasant	edible nuts		3
Beaked hazelnut *Corylus cornuta*	d	6-10'	moderate	x	x		x		high – beaked nuts used by both mammals & birds	good for hedges; edible nuts		5
Speckled alder *Alnus rugosa*	d	15-25'	fast		x		x	x	moderate – buds & twigs browsed by muskrat, rabbits, moose, deer, beaver, grouse	tiny cones make Xmas decorations	very good	3
Spicebush *Lindera benzoin*	d	12'	moderate		x		x	x	high – many mammals and birds eat fruits, buds, & twigs; attracts swallowtail butterflies	spicy scented flowers and leaves; shiny red fruits		5
Witch hazel *Hamamelis virginiana*	d	20-30'	slow	x	x		x		moderate	yellow flowers in autumn after leaves fall		4
Rhodora azalea *Rhododendron canadense*	d	3-4'	slow		x		x	x	low	very showy rose purple flowers before leaves		3
Swamp azalea *Rhododendron viscosum*	d	5'	moderate	x	x		x	x	low	glossy leaves, very showy white - pink flowers		5
Early azalea *Rhododendron roseum*	d	10'	slow	x		x	x		low	very showy white or pink flowers		4
Blackberry *Rubus allegheniensis*	d	6'	fast		x	x	x	x	very high – fruits eaten by over 40 species of birds inc. woodcock, turkey, grouse; also by many mammals	makes good barrier		3
Raspberry *Rubus idaeus*	d	6'	fast	x	x	x	x		same as above – fruits eaten by many mammals & birds	makes good barrier		3
Meadowsweet *Spiraea latifolia*	d	5'	moderate		x		x		low	white or pale pink flowers	very good	2
Steeplebush *Spiraea tomentosa*	d	4'	moderate	x	x		x	x	low	spires of pink flowers		3
Staghorn sumac *Rhus typhina*	d	20'	fast	x	x	x			very high – fruits late winter survival food for mammals and migrating songbirds; twigs eaten by moose, deer, N E cottontail rabbit	colorful fruit clusters, brilliant fall color; velvet covered branches	good	3
Smooth sumac *Rhus glabra*	d	9-15'	fast		x	x			high – fruits	red fruit clusters, orange-red fall color		3
Sweet gale *Myrica gale*	d	2-4'	slow		x		x	x	moderate – grouse eat buds and leaves; deer browse	aromatic foliage		3
Sweetfern *Comptonia peregrina*	d	2-4'	slow-moderate	x	x	x			moderate – grouse, deer feed on foliage	gray green aromatic fern-like leaves		3
Pasture juniper *Juniperus communis*	e	1-4'	slow		x	x			moderate – food for grouse, pheasant, deer, moose, small mammals, & birds	foliage; good ground cover		3

from *Riparian Buffers for the Connecticut River Watershed*, Connecticut River Joint Commissions, 2000

Acceptable Plantings for Buffers to Resource Areas

A resource list provided by the Brewster Conservation Commission

	Stabilize Steep Embankments	Provide Windbreaks/ Screening	Tolerates Strong Wind/Salt Spray	Tolerates Moist Soils	Tolerates Shade	Thrives in Full Sun	Tolerates Dry Conditions
TREES							
Acer rubrum **Red Maple**	x	x		x	x	x	
Betula papyrifera **White Birch**				x		x	
Betula nirga **River Birch**				x		x	
Cornus alternifolia **Pagoda Dogwood**				x	x	x	
Cornus florida **Flowering Dogwood**				x	x	x	
Fagus grandifolia **American Beech**	x	x		x	x		
Ilex opaca **American Holly**		x				x	
Juniperus virginiana **Red Cedar**	x	x	x	x		x	x
Nyssa sylvatica **Black Gum**				x		x	x
Ostrya virginiana **Hop Hornbeam**	x	x		x	x		x
Pinus strobus **White Pine**	x	x		x	x	x	x
Populus grandidenta or tremuloides **Aspen**	x					x	
Prunus pennsylvanica **Pin Cherry**			x	x		x	x
Prunus serotina **Black Cherry**	x		x	x		x	x
Prunus virginia **Chokecherry**	x			x	x	x	x
Quercus alba **White Oak**	x	x					
Quercus bicolor **Swamp White Oak**		x	x	x	x	x	x
Quercus rubra **Red Oak**	x	x				x	x
Quercus velutina **Black Oak**	x	x	x			x	x
Rhus typhina or Rhus glabra **Sumac**	x		x			x	x
Tsuga Canadensis **Eastern Hemlock**	x	x		x	x		
SHRUBS							
Amelanchiar canadensis **Shadbush**		x	x	x		x	x
Aronia arbutifolia **Red Chokeberry**			x	x	x	x	x
Aronia melanocarpa **Black Chokeberry**			x	x	x	x	x

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Cephalanthus occidentalis **Buttonbush**				X		X	
Chionanthus virginicus **White Fringe Tree**				X	X		
Clethra Alnifolia **Sweet Pepper Bush**	X			X	X	X	X
Comptonia peregrina **Sweet Fern**	X		X		X	X	X
Cornus amomum **Silky Dogwood**				X		X	
Cornus sericea **Redosier Dogwood**				X		X	
Hydrangea quercifolia **Oakleaf Hydrangea**	X		X	X	X		
Ilex glabra **Inkberry**		X	X	X	X	X	
Ilex verticillata **Winterberry Holly**				X	X	X	
Juniperus Communis **Common Juniper**	X	X	X			X	X
Kalmia latifolia **Mountain Laurel**	X	X		X	X		
Lindera benzoin **Common Spicebush**	X			X	X		
Myrica pensylvanica **Bayberry**	X	X	X	X		X	X
Potentialla fruticosa **Bush Cinquefoil**			X	X		X	X
Prunus maritima **Beach Plum**	X		X			X	X
Rhododendron nudiflorum **Pink Azalea**				X	X		X
Rhododendron roseum **Mountain Azalea**	X			X	X	X	X
Rosa virginiana/carolina **Virginia or Carolina Rose**	X		X	X		X	X
Rubus occidentalis or strigosus **Raspberry**				X	X	X	X
Salix discolor **Pussy Willow**	X			X	X	X	
Sambucus canadensis **Common Elderberry**	X			X	X	X	X
Spirea latifolia **Meadowsweet**				X		X	X
Spirea tomentosa **Steeplebush**				X		X	
Vaccinium corymbossum **Highbush Blueberry**			X	X	X	X	X
Viburnum acerfolium **Mapleleaf Viburnum**	X			X	X		X
Viburnum dentatum **Northern Arrowwood**	X		X	X	X	X	X
Viburnum lentago **Nannyberry**	X			X	X		X
Viburnum prunifolium **Blackhaw Viburnum**	X			X		X	X
Viburnum trilobum **American Cranberrybush**	X			X	X	X	

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GROUNDCOVERS							
Arctostaphylos Uva-Ursi **Bearberry**	x		x		x	x	x
Juniperus conferta **Shore juniper**	x		x			x	x
Vaccinium augustifolium **Lowbush blueberry**	x			x	x	x	x
Dennstaedtia punctilobula **Hay Scented Fern**				x	x	x	
Juncus effusus **Soft Rush**				x		x	
Chamaecrista fasciculata **Partridge Pea**	x					x	x
Matteuccia struthiopteris **Ostrich Fern**				x	x		
Onoclea sensibilis **Sensitive Fern**				x	x	x	
Grasses							
Agrostis stolonifera **Creeping Bent Grass**				x		x	
Ammophila breviligulata **Amer. Beach Grass**	x		x			x	x
Festuca rubra **Creeping Red Fescue**	x				x	x	x
Elymus virginicus **Virginia Wild Rye**	x				x	x	x
Elymus canadensis **Canada Wild-Rye**	x				x	x	x
Elymus villosus **Silky Wild-Rye**	x				x	x	x
Panicum clandestinum **Deertongue**	x				x	x	x
Panicum virgatum **Switchgrass**	x				x	x	x
Poa palustris **Fowl Bluegrass**	x				x	x	x
Deschampsia flexulosa **Crinkled Hair Grass**	x				x	x	x
Andropogon gerardii **Big Bluestem**	x					x	x
Schizachyrium scoparius **Little Bluestem**	x					x	x
Sorghastrum nutans **Indiangrass**	x					x	x
Sporobolus cryptandrus **Sand Dropseed**	x					x	x
Panicum virgatum **Shelter Switchgrass**	x				x	x	x
Agrostis alba **Red Top**	x				x	x	x
Wildflowers							
Aster umbellatus **Flat-top Aster**	x					x	x
Eupatorium fistulosum **Joe-Pye Weed**				x		x	
Eupatorium perfoliatum **Boneset**	x			x		x	

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Verbena hastata Blue Vervain						x	x
Bidens cernua Nodding Bur-Marigold	x					x	x
Solidago canadensis Canada Goldenrod	x					x	x
Solidago graminifolia Grass-leaved Goldenrod	x					x	x
Helianthus annuus Annual Sunflower						x	x
Desmodium canadense Showy Tick-trefoil						x	x
Asclepias syriaca Common Milkweed	x			x		x	
Aster lateriflorus Calico Aster	x					x	x
Aster nova-angliae New England Aster	x					x	x
Aster novi-belgii New York Aster	x					x	x
Aster laevis Smooth Aster	x					x	x
Penstemon digitalis Beard Tongue	x					x	x
Lespedeza capitata Bush Clover	x					x	x
Asclepias tuberosa Butterfly Milkweed	x			x		x	
Lupinus perennis Wild Blue Lupine						x	x

* Plants on the following list have shown to be of moderate to high wildlife value, are commercially available in Massachusetts, and serve various other functional aspects of landscaping as noted above.

** Other plant species may only be planted in the 100-buffer zone with prior consent of the Brewster Conservation Commission.

Note: All species have been identified as commercially available at various nurseries in Massachusetts, please contact the Brewster Conservation Office at (508) 896-3701 x124, if you find any species difficult to acquire within Massachusetts.