

Native Woody Plants that Support Birds, Bunnies, and other Wildlife

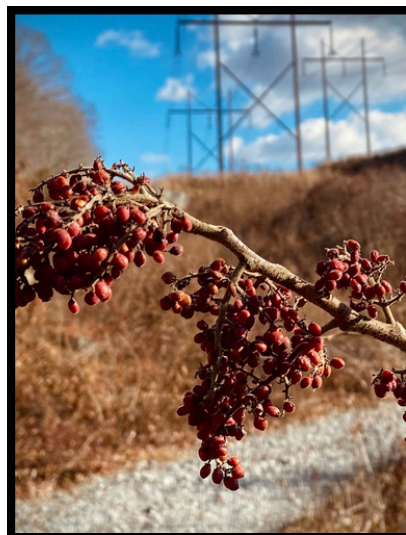
Easy use identification guide for native plants to be protected and planted in Southern CT for the benefit of New England Cottontail and many other species of wildlife

The Connecticut Wildlife Action Plan identifies over 50 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) that utilize the vegetation of shrubland/young forest habitats. This includes vegetation that can be found within a utility right-of-way, which is managed to limit the height of vegetation.

Native shrubland habitat is limited because many areas have become mature forest due to succession. Not only is shrubland habitat critical to conserve the New England Cottontail, it is an important stopover place for migrating birds. Many find fuel to continue on to the journey north, while others settle during the summer and raise young. Caterpillars that feed on specific host native plants comprise a large part of the birds' summer diet.

Use this guide to find plants to protect and install in your home landscape. The provided information includes a list of shrubs, vines, and small trees of conservation importance. A detailed description, pictures, wetland status, shade tolerance status, and height of each plant is included.

Note: This selection is not a complete list of the native plants available.



Wetland Status Categories

FAC

Facultative; species is equally likely to occur in wetlands or non-wetlands (estimated probability 34%-66%.)

FACW

Facultative Wetland; species usually occurs in wetlands (estimated probability 67%-99%), but is occasionally found in non-wetlands.

UPL

Obligate Upland; species occurs in wetlands in another region, but occurs almost always (estimated probability >99%) under natural conditions in non-wetlands in the region specified.

FACU

Facultative Upland; species usually occurs in non-wetlands (estimated probability 67%-99%), but is occasionally found in wetlands (estimated probability 1%-33%.)

OBL

Obligate Wetland; species occurs almost always (estimated probability >99%) under natural conditions in wetlands.

NI

No Indicator/Not Classified; insufficient information was available for the species to determine an indicator status, or species was not considered by the Regional Panel.

Wetland status categories provided by <https://help.natureserve.org>. Please Use the QR code provided for more information.



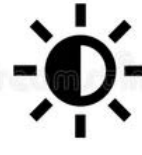
Shade Tolerance Categories



Shade Tolerant



Shade Intolerant
(full sun)



Intermediate Shade

N/D

No Data

For USDA plant profile characteristics for shade tolerance, please use the QR code below for more information about plant profiles.



All photos have been provided by gobotany.nativeplanttrust.org. Please use the QR code for more plant details.



Listed below are plants in alphabetical order which are compatible in Zone 1 and/or Zone 2 in a utility right-of-way. Plants are grouped in the guide with plants that share similar identifiable features to make it easier to compare and contrast.

Zone 1 Plants

Z1

Do not exceed 15 feet of height. Compatible under power lines.

Plants in Alphabetical Order	Page Number
Black Huckleberry (<i>Gaylussacia baccata</i>)	9
Choke Cherry (<i>Prunus virginiana</i>)	4
Coastal Sweet-Pepperbush (<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>)	5
Common Blackberry (<i>Rubus allegheniensis</i>)	7
Common Buttonbush (<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>)	11
Common Juniper (<i>Juniperus communis</i>)	14
Common Low-bush Blueberry (<i>Vaccinium angustifolium</i>)	9
Common Winterberry (holly) (<i>Ilex verticillata</i>)	5
Foxgrape (<i>Vitis labrusca</i>)	8
Glaucous Leaved Greenbrier (<i>Smilax glauca</i>)	8
Gray Dogwood (<i>Swida racemosa</i>)	11
High-bush Blueberry (<i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>)	9
Maleberry (<i>Lyonia ligustrina</i>)	4
Mountain Laurel (<i>Kalmia latifolia</i>)	10
Purple Chokeberry (<i>Aronia floribunda</i>)	4
Roundleaf Greenbriar (<i>Smilax rotundifolia</i>)	8
Silky Dogwood (<i>Swida amomum</i>)	5
Small Bayberry (<i>Morella caroliniensis</i>)	7
Smooth Sumac (<i>Rhus glabra</i>)	6
Steeplebush (<i>Spiraea tomentosa</i>)	10
Swamp Rose (<i>Rosa palustris</i>)	7
Sweet-Fern (<i>Comptonia peregrina</i>)	6
White Meadowsweet (<i>Spiraea alba</i>)	10
Winged Sumac (<i>Rhus copallinum</i>)	6

Zone 2 Plants

Z2

Trees that do not exceed 35 feet of height

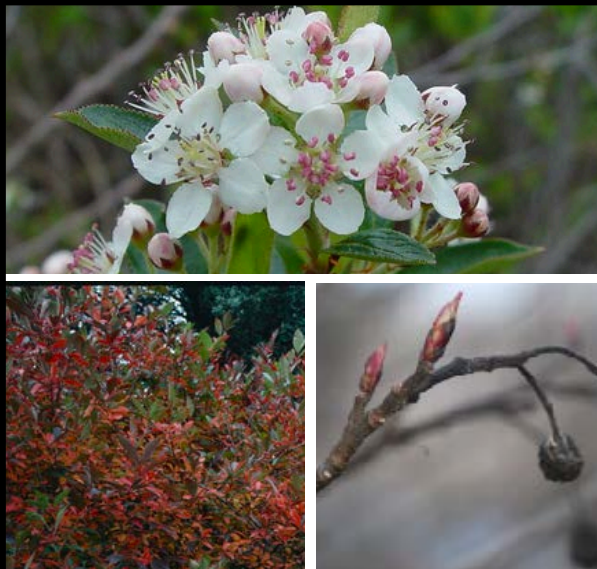
Plants in Alphabetical Order	Page Number
American Hornbeam (<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>)	14
American Witch Hazel (<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>)	14
Beaked Hazelnut (<i>Corylus cornuta</i>)	13
Eastern Shadbush (<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>)	12
Flowering Dogwood (<i>Benthamidia florida</i>)	12
Smooth Alder (<i>Alnus serrulata</i>)	13
Smooth Arrowwood (<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>)	12

Common Name

Picture

Description

Purple Chokeberry
(*Aronia floribunda*)



- Shrub ranging 8-12 feet high and 8-10 feet wide
- Smooth thin bark
- Small white flowers with pink/yellow center
- Simple leaf, dark green in summer, red in autumn
- Deep purple berries

Z1

FACU

N/D

Maleberry
(*Lyonia ligustrina*)



- 6-12 feet tall
- Many stems grow from one base
- Simple green leaves in summer, leaf has hairs on upper and underside
- Bell-like white flowers turn to hard, brown, berry-like capsules that persist year-round

Z1

FACW



Choke Cherry
(*Prunus virginiana*)



- Small shrub, 3-6 feet tall
- Often forms thicket
- Leaves are simple, egg-shaped with fine serrated margins
- White flowers are in long clusters
- Cherry clusters droop at end of branches, cherry changes from dark red to black

Z1

FACU



Common Name

Picture

Description

Coastal Sweet-Pepperbush
(Clethra alnifolia)



- Shrub, 6-12 feet tall
- Has erect, spike-like clusters of fragrant white flowers
- Dry fruits persist through winter
- Dark green, oval leaves, turn dull yellow/ orange in fall

Z1

Common Winterberry
(holly)
(Ilex verticillata)



- Shrub, 3-14 feet tall
- Deciduous
- Grows in rounded form
- Clusters of small, white flowers in summer
- Develops red fruit in fall/winter
- Has male and female plants, only female plants have fruit

Z1

Silky Dogwood
(Swida amomum)



- Shrub, 6-10 feet
- Creamy white, 4-petaled, flowers in spring
- Fruit is round blue berry
- Small hairs on new reddish twigs and flower buds
- Opposite branches
- If twig is snapped, pith is dark brown

Z1

FACW



FAC



FACW



Common Name

Picture

Description

Winged Sumac
(Rhus copallinum)


UPL



- Shrub, up to 14 feet tall in CT
- Forms dense thickets
- Clusters of red berries on top
- Glossy green leaves, turn reddish-purple in fall
- Compound leaves with opposite leaflets have winged rachis

Z1

Sweet-Fern
(Comptonia peregrina)


NI



- Small shrub, 3 feet tall
- Deciduous
- Fern-like foliage
- Forms dense colonies
- Crushed leaves are strongly aromatic

Z1

Smooth Sumac
(Rhus glabra)


NI



- 10-14 feet tall in CT
- Large compound leaves, 13-30 small smooth leaflets
- Colorful red fall foliage
- Female plants have conical clusters of off-white flowers
- Erect spires of hairy red berries persist into the winter

Z1

Common Name

Picture

Description

7.

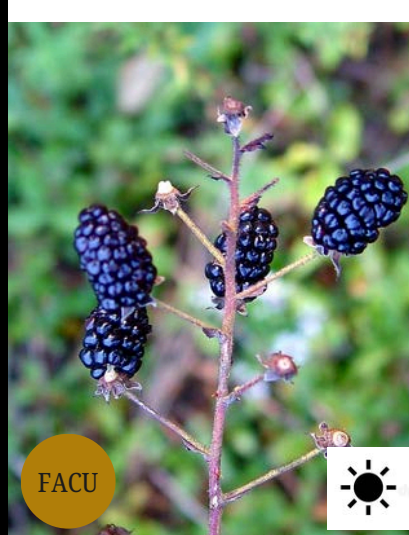
Small Bayberry (*Morella caroliniensis*)



- Shrub, 2-6 feet tall and 3-6 feet wide
- Not evergreen
- Leaves are strongly aromatic when crushed
- Simple waxy green leaves
- Small gray spherical fruits develop along the stem from yellowish green flowers

Z1

Common Blackberry (*Rubus allegheniensis*)



- Multi-stemmed shrub with arching canes
- Forms large colonies
- Shrub is armed with stout spines
- Leaves are compound, leaflets are pointed and toothed
- Each fruit is a fleshy black aggregate berry

Z1

Swamp Rose (*Rosa palustris*)



- Grows up to 7 ft tall
- Fragrant pink flowers in June and July
- Each stem node has a pair of downwardly curving, ¼ inch spines
- ⅓ inch spherical fruits are red
- Base of compound leaf has narrow flap

Z1

Common Name

Picture

Description

8.

Foxgrape (*Vitis labrusca*)



- Liana (woody vine) with stems that grow up to 40 feet long
- Off-white flowers are fragrant clusters, May and June
- Fruit develops in hanging clusters, ripens from green to purplish black in fall

FACU

N/D

Z1

Glaucous Leaved Greenbrier (*Smilax glauca*)



- Vine with prickles
- Stems are bluish
- Green triangular leaves, white wax (glaucous) on underside
- small clusters of off-white flowers bloom in spring and summer
- Clusters of dark blueish-black berries in fall

FACU



Z1

Roundleaf Greenbrier (*Smilax rotundifolia*)



- Vine with stout green prickles with dark tips
- Climbs with tendrils
- Oval leaves with a point at the tip, green on the top and underside in summer, yellow in fall
- Withered leaves may persist in winter
- Off-white flowers
- Dark blueish-black berries

FAC



Z1

Plant Name

Picture

Description

Common Low-bush Blueberry
(*Vaccinium angustifolium*)



- Shrub, up to 2 feet in height and width
- Forms colonies
- Green twigs with many lenticels
- Simple oval leaf is green in summer, turns maroon-purple in fall
- Small bell-shaped, white/pink-tinged flowers develop into blueberries

Z1

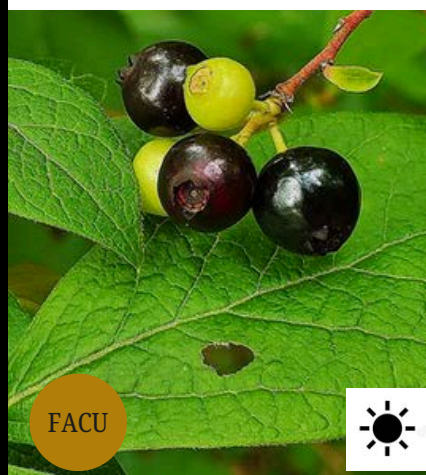
High-bush Blueberry
(*Vaccinium corymbosum*)



- Shrub, 6-12 feet in height and width
- The bark of adult plant peels off easily
- Simple oval green leaves turn red in fall
- White or pink bell-shaped flowers in drooping clusters develop into blueberries

Z1

Black Huckleberry
(*Gaylussacia baccata*)



- Shrub, up to 3 feet tall
- Forms thickets
- Densely branched
- Twigs have no lenticels
- White or red flowers develop into black berries
- Oval green leaves turn red in fall

Z1

Plant Name

Picture

Description

White Meadowsweet
(Spiraea alba)



- Shrub, 3-6 feet tall
- Toothed oblong leaves turn gold/yellow in the fall
- Color of the stems—dull brown to reddish
- Cone-shaped clusters of white flowers with pink centers
- Dry brown fruit develop in fall and persist

Z1


FACW 

Steeplebush
(Spiraea tomentosa)



- Shrub. 3-5 ft tall
- Toothed oblong green leaves have a brownish “fur” on the underside
- Leaves turn red in fall
- Twigs have hairs
- Steeple-shaped cluster of pink flowers
- Dry brown fruit develop in fall

Z1

FACW 

Mountain Laurel
(Kalmia latifolia)



- Evergreen shrub, 6-14 feet
- White and pink flower clusters bloom in June
- Forms thickets
- Simple oval leaves

Z1

FACU 

Plant Name

Picture

Description

Gray Dogwood
(*Swida racemosa*)



- Hedge forming shrub, up to 6 feet tall
- Opposite, oval shaped leaves have 3 or 4 lateral veins
- White, loosely clustered flowers bloom in June to July
- Spherical white fruit develop in late summer on red pedicles (stalks)
- Red fruit stalks persist through winter
- The bark of the adult is ridged and plated

FAC



Z1

Buttonbush
(*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)



- Shrub, up to 13 feet tall
- Opposite, simple oval shiny green leaves 2 to 6 inches long
- 1-inch diameter spherical clusters of tiny white flowers bloom from June to September
- Reddish dry fruits develop and retain position in spherical cluster

OBL



Z1

Plant Name

Picture

Description

Smooth Arrowwood
(Viburnum dentatum)



- Shrub, 6-10 feet tall
- 2 to 4-inch clusters of white flowers in May to early June
- Flowers develop into ¼ inch blueish-black drupes
- Opposite simple toothed leaves have an arrowhead shape

FAC



Z1

Flowering Dogwood
(Benthamidia florida)



- Shrub, 5 to 30 feet tall
- White petal-like bracts surround a small cluster of greenish-yellow flowers
- Fruits are bright red drupes in clusters
- Fall leaves are red and purple
- Mature bark is broken up into small regular plates, like scales

FACU



Z2

Eastern Shadbush
(Amelanchier canadensis)



- Shrub, 6-20 feet tall
- White flowers in April
- Red/purple berries in June
- Simple green leaf turns red in fall.
- Mature plant has smooth bark

FAC



Z2

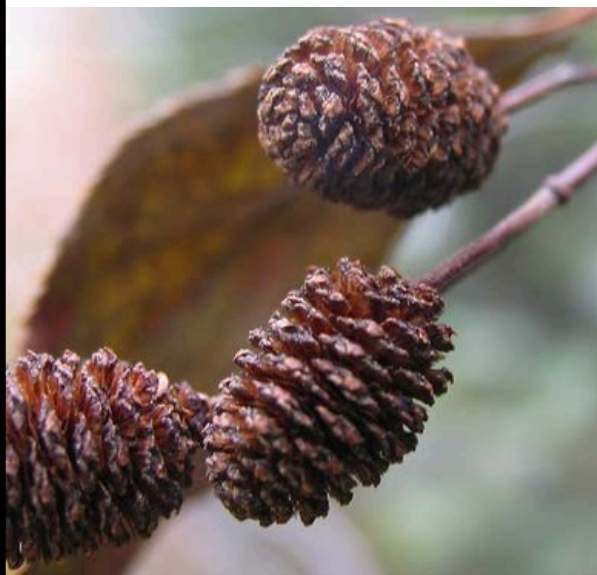
Plant Name

Picture

Description

13.

Smooth Alder (*Alnus serrulata*)



- Shrub, 12 to 20 feet tall
- Simple oval leaves are green in summer, yellow-red in the fall
- Male and female flowers are on the same plant
- Red female flowers are small and upright, yellow male flowers (catkins) are longer and drooping
- The fruits are dry and resemble tiny pine cones.
- Mature shrub has smooth brown bark

OBL



Z2

Beaked Hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta*)



- 4 to 8 feet tall
- Simple oval leaves are green in summer, yellow-red in the fall
- Male and female flowers are on the same plant
- Red female flowers are small and compact, pale yellow male flowers (catkins) are longer and drooping
- Distinct edible nuts are enclosed within a beak-like shell

FACU



Z1

Plant Name

Picture

Description

American Witch Hazel
(*Hamamelis virginiana*)



- Shrub, 20 to 30 feet tall
- Many stems arise from a single base
- The bottom of the simple leaf is more rounded on one side of the central vein than the other
- Bright yellow flowers bloom mid-to-late fall
- Dry fruits split open and spill seeds

FACU



Z2

American Hornbeam
(*Carpinus carolinana*)



- Tree, 20-30 feet tall
- Simple leaves turn orange-red in the fall
- Fruits are “nutlets” held together in a chain-like cluster which are about 6 inches long
- The mature tree’s bark is grey and smooth with an appearance of sinewy muscles
- Also called musclewood

Z2

FAC



Common Juniper
(*Juniperus communis*)



- Shrub, 2-5 feet tall in CT
- Sprawling evergreen conifer with 3 flat needle-like leaves per node
- Blue spherical berry-like seed cones
- Not to be confused with upright Eastern Red Cedar

Z1

FACU



CREDITS

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This project was carried out on behalf of the Town of Lyme
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The list of Native Plants to be Conserved and Protected
was compiled by Bryan Connolly, PhD
Reference: March 2024 “Hartman Park Lyme, CT,
New England Cottontail Management Plan”

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