



NATIVE PLANT *alternatives*

www.scnps.org

FROM THE LOWCOUNTRY CHAPTER OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Invasive species are non-native plants that spread aggressively, outcompeting native vegetation, reducing wildlife habitat, and disrupting ecosystems. Many were introduced for horticulture use, while others arrived unintentionally through human activity. The invasive species highlighted here are especially problematic in the Lowcountry of South Carolina.

There are native alternatives that offer the same appealing traits, such as showy blooms, evergreen foliage, fall color, or unique forms, while thriving in the same sun and soil conditions. These native plants not only provide beauty and resilience in landscapes but also support local biodiversity. The following list provides recommended native alternatives to invasive exotic plants commonly found in the Lowcountry. For more information on invasive species, please visit the South Carolina Exotic Pest Plant Council [Invasive Plant Booklet](#).

INVASIVE	NATIVE ALTERNATIVES
Chinaberry (<i>Melia azedarach</i>) Feature: Tree with showy blooms	Black willow (<i>Salix nigra</i>)
	Loblolly pine (<i>Pinus taeda</i>)
	Southern magnolia (<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>)
Chinese tallow (<i>Triadica sebifera</i>) Feature: Tree with showy fall foliage and seeds	Dahoon holly (<i>Ilex cassine</i>)
	Black tupelo (<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>)
	Cherry laurel (<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>)
Mimosa (<i>Albizia julibrissin</i>) Feature: Tree with showy blooms	Eastern red cedar (<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>)
	Bald cypress (<i>Taxodium distichum</i>)
	Serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier grandiflora</i>)
Privet (<i>Ligustrum</i> sp.) Feature: Evergreen tree with showy blooms	Cherry laurel (<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>)
	Common wax-myrtle (<i>Myrica cerifera</i>)
	American holly (<i>Ilex opaca</i>)
Thorny olive (<i>Elaeagnus pungens</i>) Feature: Evergreen shrub with showy foliage	Common wax-myrtle (<i>Morella cerifera</i>)
	Yaupon holly (<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>)
	Sparkleberry (<i>Vaccinium arboreum</i>)
Callery Pear (<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>) 'Bradford' Feature: Tree with showy spring blooms	Eastern redbud (<i>Cercis canadensis</i>)
	White fringetree (<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>)
	Flowering Dogwood (<i>Cornus florida</i>)

INVASIVE	NATIVE ALTERNATIVES
Chinese wisteria (<i>Wisteria sinensis</i>) Feature: Vine with showy bloom	American wisteria (<i>Wisteria frutescens</i>)
	Purple passion flower (<i>Passiflora incarnata</i>)
	Climbing aster (<i>Ampelaster carolinianus</i>)
Autumn clematis (<i>Clematis terniflora</i>) Feature: Vine with showy blooms	Climbing hydrangea (<i>Hydrangea barbara</i>)
	Climbing aster (<i>Ampelaster carolinianus</i>)
	Crossvine (<i>Bignonia capreolata</i>)
English ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>) Feature: Evergreen groundcover vine	Green and gold (<i>Chrysogonum virginianum</i>)
	Partridgeberry (<i>Mitchella repens</i>)
	Creeping Phlox (<i>Phlox stolonifera</i>)
Japanese honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera japonica</i>) Feature: Vine with showy fragrant blooms	Coral honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>)
	Carolina jessamine (<i>Gelsemium sempervirens</i>)
	Virgin's bower (<i>Clematis virginiana</i>)
Japanese climbing fern (<i>Lygodium japonicum</i>) Feature: Climbing fern	Sensitive fern (<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>)
	Southern woodfern (<i>Dryopteris ludoviciana</i>)
	Christmas fern (<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>)
Multiflora Rose (<i>Rosa multiflora</i>) Feature: Perennial with showy blooms	Seashore-mallow (<i>Kosteletzkya pentacarpos</i>)
	Swamp rose (<i>Rosa palustris</i>)
	Scarlet rose mallow (<i>Hibiscus coccineus</i>)
Chinese silvergrass (<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>) Feature: Grass with showy bloom	Bushy bluestem (<i>Andropogon glomeratus</i>)
	Yellow Indiangrass (<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>)
	Switchgrass (<i>Panicum virgatum</i>)
Golden Bamboo (<i>Phyllostachys aurea</i>) Feature: Grassy screen	River Cane (<i>Arundinaria gigantea</i>)
	Yaupon holly (<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>)
	Saw palmetto (<i>Serenoa repens</i>)
Heavenly bamboo (<i>Nandina domestica</i>) Feature: Shrub with showy foliage	Oakleaf hydrangea (<i>Hydrangea quercifolia</i>)
	American beautyberry (<i>Callicarpa americana</i>)
	Sumac (<i>Rhus</i> sp.)
Greater periwinkle (<i>Vinca major</i>) Feature: Herbaceous plant with showy blooms	Hairy phlox (<i>Phlox amoena</i>)
	Eastern blue phlox (<i>Phlox divaricate</i>)
	Walter's violet (<i>Viola walteri</i>)
Rattlebox (<i>Crotalaria spectabilis</i>) Feature: Herbaceous plant with showy blooms	Carolina lupine (<i>Thermopsis villosa</i>)
	Wild indigo (<i>Baptisia</i> sp.)
	Partridge Pea (<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>)