

Virginia Firescapes

Firewise Landscaping for Woodland Homes



*In Virginia, one of every three forest fires now threatens at least one woodland home.
Forest fires damaged 98 structures in 1995 and 40 in 1996.*

The Firescape

When the forest becomes a community, forest fires and homes are inseparable.

A home in a woodland setting is surrounded by flammable vegetation. Firewise landscaping can help you create a defensible space or buffer zone around your home. This not only helps to keep fire from approaching your woodland home, but it also provides a safe space in which firefighters can work.

Your goal in firewise landscaping should be to “break the chain” of fuel between homes and natural vegetation. Examine the yard and determine what can catch fire and what can carry fire to the house.

The Plant List

The trees, shrubs, groundcovers and vines listed in this publication have been assigned a general flammability rating to help you create a firewise landscape around your woodland home. Some plants are more fire-resistant than others, but **THERE ARE NO FIRE-PROOF PLANTS. UNDER EXTREME FIRE CONDITIONS ALL PLANTS WILL BURN!**

The location of plants in your yard should always be carefully planned. **The arrangement, spacing and density of plants that grow around the house can be more crucial than what species are planted.**

Proper maintenance is also vital to remove excess debris and help plants retain their fire-resistive properties. Pruning can increase a plant's fire resistance, whereas lack of maintenance can make plants more flammable!



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LISTS OF "MORE OR LESS" FOREST FIRE-PRONE
TREES, SHRUBS AND GROUND COVERS

Flammability Rating: H = High
M = Medium
L = Low

Use: S = Shade
Sp = Specimen
Sc = Screen
F = Foundation
H = Hedge
GC = Ground Cover

DECIDUOUS TREES

Scientific Name	Common Name	Native to VA	Use	Flammability Rating	Comments
Acer negundo	Boxelder	N	S	L	Tolerates poor soils, pH adaptable. Short lived.
Acer palmatum	Japanese maple		Sp	L	Requires a sheltered location. Not heat/drought tolerant.
Acer pensylvanicum	Striped maple	N	Sp, S	L	Prefers shade.
Acer platanoides	Norway maple		S	M	Tolerates a wide range of soil conditions.
Acer rubrum	Red/Swamp maple	N	S, Sp	L	Tolerates wet soil conditions.
Acer saccharinum	Silver/River/Soft Maple	N	S	L	Brittle, weak wood is easily broken in wind and ice storms.
Acer saccharum	Sugar/Rock/Hard Maple	N	S, Sp	L	Susceptible to acid rain damage and road de-icing salts. Not heat tolerant.
Acer spicatum	Mountain maple	N	S, Sc	L	Best in wooded conditions.
Aesculus hippocastanum	Horsechestnut		S, Sp	L	Susceptible to many diseases, pH adaptable. Not heat tolerant.
Aesculus pavia	Red buckeye	N	Sc	L	Small, shrubby.
Albizia julibrissin	Mimosa, Silktree		Sp	M	Very adaptable to high pH, soil salinity and drought. Short lived.
Amelanchier arborea	Downy serviceberry, Shadblow	N	Sp, Sc	L	Tolerant of drought, but not air pollution.
Aralia spinosa	Devil's walkingstick	N	Sp	L	Tolerates poor soils and urban conditions. Dangerous spines.
Asimina triloba	Pawpaw	N	Sp, S	L	Tolerant of wet soils, edible fruits.
Betula alleghaniensis	Yellow birch	N	S, Sp	L	Not tolerant of heat/drought.
Betula lenta	Black birch	N	S, Sp	L	Similar to above species.
Betula nigra	River birch	N	S, Sp	L	Tolerates wet soils, not tolerant of pH above 6.5.
Betula papyrifera	Paper/White/Canoe birch	N	S, Sp	L	Insect problems, not heat tolerant. Should not be used in difficult, polluted sites.
Betula pendula	European white birch	N	Sp, S	L	Prono to bronze birch borer damage. Not heat tolerant.
Broussonetia papyrifera	Paper mulberry		S	H	Tolerates most soil conditions, also heat and drought. Weedy.
Carpinus caroliniana	Hornbeam	N	S	L	Tolerates wet soils and periodic flooding.
Carya cordiformis	Bitternut hickory	N	S	L	Fast growing hickory. Grown from seed only, as with all hickories.
Carya glabra	Pignut hickory	N	S, Sp	L	Tolerates varied soils.
Carya illinoensis	Pecan	N	S	L	Valuable for fruits.
Carya ovata	Shagbark hickory	N	S	L	Interesting, peeling bark.
Carya tomentosa	Mockernut hickory	N	S	L	Tolerates varied soils.
Castanea dentata	American chestnut	N	S	L	Few found due to blight.
Castanea mollissima	Chinese chestnut	N	S	L	Tolerates hot, dry climates.
Catalpa bignonioides	Southern catalpa	N	S, Sp	M	Tolerates many soil types, also hot, dry sites.
Catalpa speciosa	Northern catalpa	N	S	L	Tolerates many soil types, also hot, dry sites.
Celtis laevigata	Sugarberry	N	S	L	Tolerates wind and poor soils, pH adaptable.
Celtis occidentalis	Common hackberry	N	Sp, S	L	Adapts to urban conditions.
Cercis canadensis	Eastern redbud	N	Sp	L	Tolerates partial shade and air pollution.
Chioanthus virginicus	Fringetree	N	Sp, S	L	Prune in summer. Not heat tolerant.
Cladrastis kentuckea	Yellowwood	N	Sp, S	L	Not suitable for hot, dry, exposed areas or in poorly drained soils.
Cornus florida	Flowering dogwood	N	Sp, S	L	Will not tolerate wet soils. More heat tolerant than above species.
Cornus kousa	Kousa/Chinese dogwood		Sp, S	L	Stems are covered with large thorns. Susceptible to rust diseases.
Crataegus crus-galli	Cockspur hawthorn	N	Sp	L	Stems are covered with large thorns. Susceptible to rust diseases.
Crataegus phaenopyrum	Washington hawthorn	N	Sp	L	Stems are covered with large thorns. Susceptible to rust diseases.
Diospyros virginiana	Persimmon	N	S	L	Tolerates poor, dry soils, pH adaptable.
Elaeagnus angustifolia	Russian-olive		Sc, S	L	Salt tolerant and withstands drought. Not heat tolerant, weedy.
Fagus grandifolia	American beech	N	S, Sp	M	Root system is easily damaged by construction. Needs good soils.
Fagus sylvatica	European beech	N	S, Sp	M	Does not tolerate heat well.
Fraxinus americana	White ash	N	S	L	Good resistance to heat and drought.
Fraxinus nigra	Black ash	N	S	L	Tolerates wet soils and periodic flooding.
Fraxinus pennsylvanica	Green ash	N	S	L	Tolerates drought, high soil pH, salt and poor soils.
Ginkgo biloba	Ginkgo, Maidenhair tree		S, Sp	L	Urban tolerant. Fruits are unsightly and malodorous, use male cultivars.

DECIDUOUS TREES

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<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> var. <i>inermis</i>	Thornless honeylocust	N	S	L	Tolerates drought, soil salts and high pH. Use thornless forms, as thorns are dangerous.
<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i>	Kentucky coffeetree	N	S	L	Tolerates drought and urban conditions.
<i>Halesia carolina</i>	Carolina silverbell	N	Sp	L	Prefers moist soil. Understory tree.
<i>Juglans cinerea</i>	Butternut	N	S	L	Slow growing. Tolerates varied conditions.
<i>Juglans nigra</i>	Black walnut	N	S	L	Prime timber tree. Phytotoxic to many other plants.
<i>Koeleruteria paniculata</i>	Goldenrain tree	N	Sp, S	L	Tolerates heat, drought, air pollution and poor fertility.
<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	Sweetgum	N	S, Sp	L	Suitable tree for wet soils.
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	Tuliptree, Tulip poplar	N	S, Sp	L	Does not tolerate poor growing conditions.
<i>Maclura promifera</i>	Osage orange	N	S, Sc	L	Tolerates drought, wind, extreme heat and wet soils.
<i>Magnolia acuminata</i>	Cucumber magnolia	N	S, Sp	L	Does not tolerate extremely dry or wet soils.
<i>Magnolia stellata</i>	Star magnolia	N	Sp	L	Heat tolerant.
<i>Magnolia tripetala</i>	Umbrella magnolia	N	Sp	L	Tolerates wet soils, but not drought.
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Sweetbay magnolia	N	Sp, S	L	Resistant to air pollution. Prone to spring frost damage.
<i>Magnolia x soulangiana</i>	Saucer magnolia	N	Sp	L	Species is prone to insect and disease problems.
<i>Malus sp.</i>	Flowering crabapple	N	S	L	Rapid grower with very weak wood. Poison fruit.
<i>Melia azdarach</i>	Chinaberry	N	Sp, S	H	Species has existed for at least 50 million years. Prefers moist, well-drained soils.
<i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i>	Dawn redwood	N	S	L	Very adaptable tree. Prone to insect and disease problems.
<i>Morus alba</i>	White mulberry	N	S	L	Edible fruits.
<i>Morus rubra</i>	Red mulberry	N	S, Sp	L	Not tolerant of air pollution or alkaline soils. Tolerates wet soils.
<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	Black gum, Black tupelo,	N	S	L	Tolerates dry soils.
<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	Sour gum, Swamp tupelo	N	S	L	Tolerates dry soils.
<i>Oxydendrum arboreum</i>	Hophornbeam	N	Sp, S	L	Not resistant to drought or air pollution.
<i>Paulownia tomentosa</i>	Empress tree, Paulownia,	N	S, Sp	L	Withstands air pollutants and does well in coastal areas and mountain valleys.
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	American sycamore	N	S	M	Tolerates urban conditions with wet or dry soils, prone to disease problems.
<i>Platanus x acerifolia</i>	London planetree	N	S	M	Very tolerant to urban conditions.
<i>Populus alba</i>	White poplar	N	S	L	Tolerant of most soil conditions. Brittle wood, not suitable for residential use.
<i>Populus deltoides</i>	Cottonwood	N	S	L	Tolerant of most soil conditions. Short lived.
<i>Populus grandidentata</i>	Big-toothed aspen	N	S	L	Tolerates dry soils. Valuable for pulp wood.
<i>Prunus cerasifera</i>	Purpleleaf/cherry plum	N	Sp, S	L	Avoid heavy soils and air pollution. Prone to many insect problems.
<i>Prunus persica</i>	Common/Flowering peach	N	Sp, S	L	Subject to many insect and disease problems. Short lived.
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Wild black cherry	N	S	L	Tolerates most soil types. Can become invasive. Poisonous to livestock.
<i>Prunus serotina</i>	Japanese flowering cherry	N	Sp, S	L	Stressed trees are more susceptible to insect and disease problems. Short lived.
<i>Prunus subhirtella</i>	Weeping/Higan/Rosebud cherry	N	Sp, S	L	Not drought tolerant.
<i>Prunus x yedoensis</i>	Yoshino cherry	N	Sp, S	L	Tolerates a range of soil conditions. Prone to borer attack.
<i>Ptelea trifoliata</i>	Water ash	N	S	L	Tolerates heavy shade.
<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	Gallery pear	N	S, Sp	L	Drought-resistant. Prune to create stronger crotch angles.
<i>Pyrus communis</i>	Common pear	N	S	L	Prone to fireblight disease, use resistant varieties.
<i>Quercus alba</i>	White oak	N	S	L	Very susceptible to construction damage. Tolerates various soils.
<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	Swamp white oak	N	S	L	Tolerates wet, acidic soils.
<i>Quercus coccinea</i>	Scarlet oak	N	S	L	Less tolerant than other oaks of adverse conditions.
<i>Quercus falcata</i>	Southern red oak	N	S	L	Prefers drier soils.
<i>Quercus marilandica</i>	Blackjack oak	N	S	L	Tolerates sandy soils.
<i>Quercus nigra</i>	Water oak	N	S	L	Tolerates wet soils.
<i>Quercus palustris</i>	Pin oak, Swamp oak	N	S	L	Tolerates wet soils.
<i>Quercus phellos</i>	Willow oak	N	S	L	Will withstand very wet conditions. Maintain pH below 6.0.
<i>Quercus prinus</i>	Chestnut oak	N	S	L	Transplants readily. Tolerates wet soils.
<i>Quercus rubra</i>	Red/Northern red oak	N	S	L	Tolerates dry, poor soils.
<i>Quercus stellata</i>	Post oak	N	S	L	Moderately drought tolerant. Maintain pH below 6.0.
		N	S	L	Tolerates dry, poor soil conditions.

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Scientific Name	Common Name	Native to VA	Use	Flammability Rating	Comments
Quercus velutina	Black oak	N	S	L	Tolerates varied conditions, including poor soils.
Robinia pseudoacacia	Black locust	N	S	L	Tolerates dry, saline soils. Suckering problem. Spines on young growth.
Salix babylonica	Weeping willow		S, Sp	L	Grows in wet soils. Its vigorous, shallow root system can be a problem.
Salix matsudana 'Tortuosa'	Corkscrew willow		Sp, S	L	Grows in wet soils. Its vigorous, shallow root system can be a problem.
Salix nigra	Black willow	N	S	L	Grows in wet soils.
Sassafras albidum	Sassafras	N	S, Sp	L	May become invasive. Difficult to transplant.
Sorbus americana	Mountainash	N	Sp, S	L	Mountain region plant.
Taxodium distichum	Bald cypress	N	S, Sp	H	Tolerates most soil types. Requires soil with low pH.
Tilia americana	American linden, Basswood	N	S	L	Will not tolerate drought.
Tilia cordata	Littleleaf linden		S, Sp	L	Very air pollution tolerant, pH adaptable. Susceptible to Japanese beetle damage.
Ulmus alatus	Winged elm	N	S	L	May be susceptible to powdery mildew.
Ulmus americana	American elm	N	S	L	Susceptible to many insects and diseases, especially Dutch elm disease - use new resistant varieties.
Ulmus parvifolia	Lacebark/Chinese elm		S, Sp	L	Urban tolerant. Resistant to most insect and disease problems.
Ulmus pumila	Siberian elm		S	L	Fast growing, weedy, has brittle wood. Prone to many insect problems.
Ulmus rubra	Slippery elm	N	S	L	Susceptible to Dutch elm disease. Weedy.
Viburnum prunifolium	Blackhaw viburnum	N	Sc, Sp	L	Adaptable to many soil types.
Zelkova serrata	Japanese zelkova		S	L	Tolerant of drought, wind and air pollution, pH adaptable.

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DECIDUOUS SHRUBS

Scientific Name	Common Name	Native to VA	Use	Flammability Rating	Comments
Aesculus parviflora	Bottlebrush buckeye	N	Sc, Sp	L	Well-suited for use under shade trees.
Alnus rugosa (or serrulata)	Spotted alder	N	Sc	L	Tolerates wet soils.
Amorpha fruticosa	Indigobush amorpha, False indigo	N	Sc	L	Tolerates poor soils.
Aronia arbutifolia	Red chokeberry	N	Sc	L	Well adapted to many soil types and to warm or cold climates.
Aronia melanocarpa	Black chokeberry	N	Sc	L	Well adapted to many soil types, prefers cold climates.
Baccharis halimifolia	Groundsel-bush, Salt bush	N	Sc	H	Tolerates poor soils and salt.
Berberis thunbergii	Japanese barberry	N	H, F	L	Handle spiny stems with care.
Buddleia davidii	Butterfly bush	N	Sp, Sc	L	Attracts butterflies.
Callicarpa americana	Beautyberry	N	Sp, Sc	L	Prune out rank growth. Showy fruit. Best in warm climates, use introduced species in cold climates.
Calycanthus floridus	Sweetshrub; Carolina allspice	N	Sp, Sc	L	Aromatic flowers and stems.
Castanea pumila	Chinkapin, Chinquapin	N	Sc	L	Nuts for wildlife.
Ceanothus americanus	New Jersey tea	N	Sp, Sc	L	Tolerates dry soil.
Cephalanthus occidentalis	Buttonbush	N	Sc	L	Well suited for use in wet soils.
Chaenomeles speciosa	Japanese floweringquince	N	Sp, H, S	L	Well adapted to many conditions. Has spines and is susceptible to leaf diseases.
Clethra alnifolia	Summersweet clethra	N	Sp, Sc	L	Well suited for use in wet soils.
Comptonia peregrina	Sweetfern	N	Sp	L	Aromatic leaves and stems. Adapted to dry, sandy soil.
Cornus sericea	Redosier dogwood	N	Sc, Sp	M	Provides erosion control on slopes. Prefers moist soils.
Corylus americana	American hazelnut	N	Sc	L	Well adapted to many conditions.
Corylus avellana	European filbert	N	Sc	L	Prized for its nut production.
Corylus coggyria	Smokebush	N	Sp, Sc	L	Well adapted to many conditions.
Cotoneaster horizontalis	Rockspray cotoneaster	N	F, GC	L	Tolerates wind, dry, poor soils, very pH adaptable.
Cytisus scoparius	Scotchbroom	N	Sp, Sc	L	Used for stabilizing sandy soils, pH adaptable, tolerates poor soils. Can become weedy.
Deutzia gracilis	Slender deutzia	N	Sp, Sc	L	Well adapted to many conditions.
Diervilla sessilifolia	Southern bush-honeysuckle	N	H, Sc	L	Tolerates exposed sites.
Euonymus alatus	Fall firebush, winged euonymus	N	Sp, Sc	L	Not tolerant of drought or waterlogged conditions.
Euonymus americanus	American euonymus, Hearts-a-bustin, Strawberry bush	N	Sp, Sc	L	Very insect susceptible. Very adaptable to wet or dry soil conditions.
Forsythia x intermedia	Border forsythia	N	Sp, H, Sc	L	Tolerant of urban conditions, pH adaptable.
Hamamelis vernalis	Vernal witchhazel	N	Sp, Sc	L	Tolerates poorly drained soils.
Hamamelis virginiana	Common witchhazel	N	Sp, Sc	L	Very adaptable to climatic conditions.
Hibiscus syriacus	Rose-of-Sharon	N	Sp, Sc	L	Well adapted to many conditions. Susceptible to insect problems.
Hydrangea arborescens	Smooth hydrangea	N	Sp, Sc	L	Suckers freely from roots, will cover large areas if not maintained.
Hydrangea macrophylla	Bigleaf hydrangea	N	Sp, Sc	L	Plant parts are poisonous. Tolerates shade.
Hydrangea paniculata	P.G. hydrangea, panicle hydrangea	N	Sp, Sc	L	Plant parts are poisonous. Very adaptable.
Hydrangea quercifolia	Oakleaf hydrangea	N	Sp, Sc	L	Plant parts are poisonous. Tolerates shade. Rugged plant.
Hypericum prolificum	St. Johnswort	N	Sp, F, GC	L	Excellent plant for dry, heavy soils.
Ilex verticillata	Winterberry holly	N	Sp, Sc	L	Tolerates wet soils.
Itea virginica	Virginia sweetspire	N	Sp, Sc	L	Tolerates wet soils.
Jasminum nudiflorum	Winter jasmine	N	Sp, H	L	Drought tolerant, used in erosion control.
Lagerstroemia indica	Crape myrtle	N	Sp, Sc	L	Tolerant of Drought and urban conditions, Not cold tolerant.
Leucothoe racemosa	Sweetbells leucothoe	N	Sc	H	Tolerates wide range of conditions
Ligustrum vulgare	Cimmon privet, Hedge privet	N	H	M	Subject to winter dieback in cold exposed areas. Weedy and invasive.
Ligustrum x vicaryi	Golden Vicary privet	N	H	M	Golden Yellow leaves will become greenish yellow if grown in shade.
Lindera benzoin	Spicebush	N	Sc	L	Tolerates Shade. Has scented foliage.
Lonicera fragrantissima	Winter Honeysuckle	N	Sp, Sc	L	Adapts to many soils and ph levels. Weedy
Lonicera tatarica	Tatarian Honeysuckle	N	Sc, Sp	L	Has escaped cultivation and become a weed in some areas

DECIDUOUS SHRUBS

Scientific Name	Common Name	Native to VA	Use	Flammability Rating	Comments
Philadelphus coronarius	Sweet mockorange		Sp, Sc	L	Adapts to almost any soil condition.
Physocarpus opulifolius	Nine-bark	N	Sc, Sp	L	Drought resistant, pH adaptable.
Poncirus trifoliata	Hardy-orange		Sp, Sc	L	Handle thorny stems with care. Soil adaptable.
Potentilla fruticosa	Shrubby cinquefoil	N	Sp, F	L	Adapts poorly to hot, humid locations.
Prunus glandulosa	Flowering almond		Sp, H, F	L	Very adaptable, showy. Weedy.
Rhododendron calendulaceum	Flame azalea	N	Sp, Sc	M	Requires moist acidic soil.
Rhododendron periclymenoides	Pinxterbloom azalea	N	Sp, Sc	M	Tolerates more shade than most deciduous azaleas.
Rhododendron prinophyllum	Roseshell azalea	N	Sp, Sc	M	Will tolerate higher pH levels than most deciduous azaleas.
Rhus copallina	Shining sumac	N	Sc, Sp	L	Useful for dry, rocky sites.
Rhus glabra	Smooth sumac	N	Sc	L	Tolerates drought and poor soil conditions.
Rhus typhina	Staghorn sumac	N	Sc, Sp	L	Suitable for colder climates, otherwise similar to above species.
Rosa carolina	Carolina rose	N	Sp, H	L	Tolerates wet soil conditions.
Rosa hybrids	Garden roses (florabundas, grandifloras & hybrid teas)		Sp	L	Very insect and disease susceptible. Thorny stems.
Rosa rugosa	Rugose rose		Sp, H, Sc	L	Tolerates wind, poor soils and seaside conditions.
Rosa virginiana	Virginia rose	N	Sp, H, Sc	L	Tolerates wind, poor soils and seaside conditions.
Salix discolor	Pussywillow	N	Sp, Sc	L	Tolerates poorly-drained soils. Short lived.
Sambucus canadensis	Elderberry	N	Sc, Sp	L	Tolerates both wet and dry soils.
Spirea nipponica	Nippon spirea		Sp, F	L	Adapts well to urban conditions.
Spirea prunifolia	Bridalweath spirea		Sp, Sc	L	Heavy pruning will destroy this shrub's natural arching habit.
Spirea x bumalda	Bumald spirea		Sp, F	L	Needs well drained soil.
Spirea x vanhouttei	Vanhoutte spirea		Sp, Sc	L	Very adaptable.
Symphoricarpos orbiculatus	Indian coralberry	N	Sp, Sc	L	Shade tolerant.
Syringa persica	Persian lilac		Sp, Sc	L	Heat tolerant.
Syringa vulgaris	Common lilac		Sp, Sc	L	Not heat tolerant. Prone to powdery mildew in humid areas. Requires soils with higher pH.
Vaccinium angustifolia	Lowbush blueberry	N	Sc, H	L	Prized for its berries.
Vaccinium corymbosum	Highbush blueberry	N	Sc, H	L	Tolerates acid, sandy soil conditions. Wildlife food.
Vaccinium stamineum	Deerberry	N	Sp, Sc	L	Tolerates dry, poor soils.
Viburnum acerifolium	Mapleleaf viburnum	N	Sc, Sp	L	Tolerates shade and poor soils.
Viburnum carlesi	Koreanspice viburnum		Sp, H, Sc	L	Early, fragrant flowers.
Viburnum dentatum	Arrowwood viburnum	N	Sc	L	Tolerates high pH, heavy soils and cold temperatures.
Viburnum opulus	European cranberry viburnum		Sp, Sc	L	Tolerates wet soils, pH adaptable.
Viburnum plicatum var. tomentosum	Doublefile viburnum		Sp, Sc	L	Needs good drainage and full sun.
Viburnum trilobum	Mapleleaf viburnum		Sc, Sp	L	Not heat or drought tolerant.
Viburnum x burkwoodii	Burkwood viburnum		Sc, Sp	L	Heat and cold tolerant, adaptable to urban conditions.
Vitex angus-castus	Chastetree; Vitex		Sp, Sc	L	Adaptable to poor soils and dry sites.
Weigela florida	Weigela		Sp, H, Sc, L	F	Very tolerant to air pollution.

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EVERGREEN TREES

Scientific Name	Common Name	Native to VA	Use	Flammability Rating	Comments
Abies concolor	White fir		Sp	H	Tolerates urban conditions in cooler regions.
Abies fraseri	Fraser fir	N	Sp	H	Popular as Christmas tree, use in cool regions.
Cedrus atlantica	Atlas cedar		Sp	H	Difficult to transplant, drought tolerant.
Cedrus deodara	Deodara cedar		Sp	H	Drought tolerant. Limited cold tolerance.
Cedrus libani	Cedar of Lebanon		Sp	H	Very cold hardy. Requires good drainage.
Chamaecyparis obtusa	Hinoki falsecypress		Sp, Sc	H	Requires good drainage.
Chamaecyparis pisifera	Japanese falsecypress		Sp, Sc	H	Requires good drainage.
Chamaecyparis thyoides	Atlantic whitecedar	N	Sp, Sc	H	Adapts to wet, boggy sites.
x Cupressocyparis leylandii	Leyland cypress		Sp, Sc	H	Adapts to pH extremes, salt spray, poor fertility, drought.
Cupressus arizonica	Arizona cypress		Sc, Sp	H	Tolerates hot, dry conditions.
Ilex aquifolium	English holly		Sp	H	Requires good drainage and compatible male plant for berry production. (dioecious). Not cold tolerant.
Ilex x attenuata 'Fosteri'	Fosters holly		Sp, Sc	H	Urban tolerant. Dioecious.
Ilex x 'Nellie R. Stevens'	Nellie R. Stevens holly		Sp, Sc	H	Somewhat drought tolerant. Dioecious.
Ilex opaca	American holly	N	Sp, Sc	H	Prone to native holly leafminer damage. Tolerates wet conditions.
Juniperus scopulorum	Western redcedar		Sc, Sp	H	Adapts to pH extremes, poor fertility, drought. Requires good drainage.
Juniperus virginiana	Eastern redcedar	N	Sc, Sp	H	Alternate host for cedar apple rust disease. Tolerates urban conditions. Difficult to transplant.
Magnolia grandiflora	Southern magnolia	N	Sp	H	Broadleaved - considerable litter.
Picea abies	Norway spruce		Sp	H	Tolerates cold climates and some warm climates.
Picea glauca	White spruce		Sp	H	Withstands drought, wind and temperature extremes.
Picea pungens	Colorado spruce		Sp	H	Very drought tolerant. Not heat toleant.
Pinus echinata	Shortleaf pine	N	Sc, Sp	H	Difficult to transplant due to deep taproot.
Pinus nigra	Austrian pine	N	Sp, Sc	H	Resists drought and seaside conditions. Disease problems develop with age.
Pinus palustris	Longleaf pine	N	Sp	H	Native plant.
Pinus pungens	Table mountain pine	N	Sp	H	Native - not commercially available. Rugged plant.
Pinus rigida	Pitch pine	N	Sp, Sc	H	Requires good drainage.
Pinus strobus	White pine	N	Sp, Sc	H	Sensitive to heat, air pollution and salts. Requires good drainage.
Pinus taeda	Loblolly pine	N	Sp, Sc	H	Tolerates salt spray, sandy soils.
Pinus virginiana	Japanese black pine	N	Sp, Sc	H	Tolerates salt spray, sandy soils.
Quercus hemisphaerica	Virginia pine, Jersey pine	N	Sc	H	Will grow in either sandy or heavy, clay soils.
Quercus virginiana	Laurel oak	N	S, Sp	H	Adapts to urban conditions. Prefers warm climates.
Thuja occidentalis	Live oak	N	S, Sp	H	Adapts to urban conditions. Prefers warm climates. Leaf/acorn litter.
Thuja orientalis (Platycladus)	Northern whitecedar; Arborvitae	N	Sc, F, H	H	Requires good drainage. Not heat tolerant.
Tsuga canadensis	Oriental arborvitae	N	Sc, F, H	H	Adapts to many growing conditions. Subject to several insect pests.
Tsuga caroliniana	Canadian hemlock, Eastern hemlock	N	Sp, Sc	H	Will not tolerate drought and heat. Requires good drainage.
	Carolina hemlock	N	Sp, Sc	H	Will not tolerate drought, requires good drainage.

LISTS OF "MORE OR LESS" FOREST FIRE-PRONE TREES, SHRUBS AND GROUND COVERS

EVERGREEN SHRUBS

Flammability Rating: H = High
M = Medium
L = Low

Use: S = Shade
Sp = Specimen
Sc = Screen
F = Foundation
H = Hedge
GC = Ground Cover

Scientific Name	Common Name	Native to VA	Use	Flammability Rating	Comments
Abelia x grandiflora	Glossy abelia		H, F	H	Adapts to many growing conditions.
Aucuba japonica	Japanese aucuba		Sp, F, H	H	Requires shade. Prefers warmer climates.
Berberis julianae	Wintergreen barberry		H	H	Avoid contact with spiny stems and leaves.
Buxus microphylla	Japanese boxwood		F, H, Sp	H	Partially tolerant of drought and heat.
Buxus sempervirens	American boxwood		F, H, Sp	H	Leaves and stems toxic to livestock. Applications of lime are required for plant vigor.
Buxus sempervirens suffruticosa	Edging box, English boxwood		H, Sp, F	H	Needs well drained soil.
Camellia japonica	Japanese camellia		Sp, Sc	H	Subject to winter injury, use in warmer climates only.
Camellia sasanqua	Sasanqua camellia		Sp, Sc	H	Subject to winter injury, use in warmer climates only.
Cotoneaster dammeri	Bearberry cotoneaster		F	H	Tolerates wide range of conditions, use for erosion control.
Cotoneaster salicifolius	Willowleaf cotoneaster		Sc, Sp, H	H	Tolerates poor soils, pH adaptable. Generally pest free.
Daphne odora	Winter daphne		F, Sp	H	Leaves and fruit are very poisonous. Produces highly scented flowers early.
Elaeagnus pungens	Thorny elaeagnus		Sc	H	Tolerates salt spray, drought, air pollution & wind.
Euonymus japonicus	Japanese euonymus		H, Sc	H	Subject to numerous pest problems.
Euonymus kiautschovicus	Spreading euonymus		H, Sc	H	Fruit and leaves may be toxic.
Gardenia jasminoides	Gardenia, Cape jasmine		Sp, Sc, F	H	Requires well drained, acidic soil. Use in warmer climates only.
Ilex cornuta	Chinese holly		Sc, Sp	H	Very adaptable to drought, pH, and to many soil types.
Ilex crenata	Japanese holly		H, F	H	Mildly drought tolerant. Needs well drained soil.
Ilex glabra	Inkberry holly	N	H, F	H	May be grown in acid soils on wet sites.
Ilex vomitoria	Yaupon holly	N	H, F, Sc	H	Tolerant of most soil conditions and salt spray. Use in warmer climates only.
Ilex x meserveae	Meserve holly, Blue holly		F, H, Sc	H	A male cultivar is necessary for berry production.
Juniperus chinensis	Chinese juniper		Sp	H	Tolerant of salt and alkaline soils.
Kalmia latifolia	Mountain-laurel	N	Sp, F	H	Leaves are poisonous. Requires shade.
Leucothoe fontanesiana	Drooping leucothoe	N	F, Sp	H	Not tolerant of drought or wind.
Ligustrum japonicum	Japanese privet, Waxleaf ligustrum		H, Sc	H	Adapts to poor fertility, drought, sun or shade and salt.
Mahonia aquifolium	Oregon grapeholly		Sp, H, F	H	Susceptible to winter desiccation.
Mahonia bealei	Beale's mahonia, Leatherleaf mahonia		Sp, H, F	H	Requires good soil drainage.
Myrica cerifera	Waxmyrtle; Southern bayberry	N	Sc, Sp	H	Very tolerant of soil salts and salt spray.
Myrica pensylvanica	Northern bayberry	N	Sc, Sp	H	Very tolerant of soil salts and salt spray. More cold tolerant than the above species.
Nandina domestica	Nandina		Sp, F, Sc	H	Tolerates a wide range of conditions.
Osmanthus heterophyllus	Holly osmanthus		Sc, Sp	H	Tolerates a wide range of conditions in warm climates.
Photinia x fraseri	Fraser photinia; Red-tip		Sc, H, Sp	H	Very susceptible to leaf spot disease.
Pieris japonica	Japanese pieris		Sp, F	H	Protect from wind desiccation. Requires soils with lower pH.
Pinus mugo	Mugho pine		F, Sc	H	Susceptible to many insect and disease problems.
Prunus laurocerasus	Cherry laurel, English laurel		Sc, H	H	Fruit and leaves may be mildly poisonous.
Pyracantha coccinea	Pyracantha, Firethorn		Sp, H, F	H	Tolerates drought. Avoid spines.
Raphiolepis indica	Indian hawthorn		Sp, F, H	H	Salt and wind tolerant. Use in warm climates.
Rhododendron catawbiense	Catawba rhododendron	N	Sp, Sc	H	Not heat or drought tolerant. Requires acid soil.
Rhododendron maxima	Rosebay rhododendron	N	Sp, Sc	H	Requires acid soil. Not heat tolerant.
Rhododendron obtusum	Kurume azalea		Sp, F, Sc	H	Requires well drained acid soil.
Rhododendron sp.	Hybrid azaleas		Sp, F, Sc	H	Requires well drained acid soil.
Taxus baccata	English yew		F, H, Sc	H	Plant parts are very poisonous. Requires well drained soil.
Taxus cuspidata	Japanese yew		F, H, Sc	H	Plant parts are very poisonous. Requires well drained soil.
Taxus x media	Anglojap yew		F, H, Sc	H	Leaves are very poisonous. Requires well drained soil.
Viburnum rhytidophyllum	Leatherleaf viburnum		Sp, H, Sc	H	Not wind or heat tolerant.
Yucca filamentosa	Yucca, Adam's needle, yucca	N	Sp, GC	H	Drought resistant and generally maintenance free.

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GROUNDCOVERS

Scientific Name	Common Name	Native to VA	Flammability Rating	Comments
<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Ajuga, Bugleweed		L	Not drought tolerant. Prefers light shade.
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Bearberry, Kinnikinnick	N	L	Adapts to many growing conditions. Prefers well-drained soils.
<i>Euonymus fortunei</i>	Wintergreen euonymus		L	Many forms exist, some vines. Best planted in sun. Prone to insect problems.
<i>Gaultheria procumbens</i>	Wintergreen	N	L	Good for woodland sites.
<i>Hypericum calycinum</i>	St. Johnswort		L	Used in erosion control. Poisonous.
<i>Juniperus conferta</i>	Shore juniper		H	Tolerates sandy soils. Requires good drainage, full sun.
<i>Juniperus horizontalis</i>	Creeping juniper	N	H	Grows in many soil types. Requires good drainage, full sun.
<i>Juniperus procumbens</i>	Jap. garden juniper		H	Grows in many soil types. Requires good drainage, full sun.
<i>Liriope muscari</i>	Bigblue liriope		L	Semi-tolerant of drought.
<i>Liriope spicata</i>	Liriope		L	Excellent for erosion control, drought and salt tolerant. Grows under shallow rooted trees.
<i>Ophiopogon japonicum</i>	Monkeygrass		L	Good for erosion control, drought tolerant. Prefers warm climates.
<i>Opuntia</i> spp.	Prickly pear	N	L	Native to arid regions, but very climate adaptable. Has spiny stems.
<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>	Pachysandra		L	Not tolerant to foot traffic or full sun conditions.
<i>Rhus aromatica</i>	Fragrant sumac		L	Good for erosion control, tolerates drought.
<i>Sarcococca hookerana</i> var. <i>humilis</i>	Sweetbox		L	Tolerates air pollution.
<i>Sedum</i> spp.	Sedum		L	Drought tolerant & maintenance free.
<i>Vinca major</i>	Bigleaf periwinkle		L	Good for erosion control, tolerates drought.
<i>Vinca minor</i>	Periwinkle; Vinca		L	Good for erosion control, finer texture than <i>V. major</i> . Prefers a shaded location.

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VINES

Scientific Name	Common Name	Native to VA	Flammability Rating	Comments
Aristolochia durior	Dutchman's pipe		L	Vigorous, low maintenance.
Bignonia capreolata	Crossvine		L	Vigorous, requires pruning and support. Showy. Native species are also available.
Campsis radicans	Trumpet-creeper, Trumpet vine	N	M	Invasive. Requires pruning and support. Showy.
Celastrus scandens	Bittersweet	N	M	A male plant is required for fruit set (dioecious). Invasive.
Clematis virginiana	Virgin's bower,	N	L	May be used as groundcover. Vigorous.
Clematis x Jackmanii	Jackman clematis		L	Fairly fragile, requires support. Non-aggressive. Showy.
Gelsemium sempervirens	Carolina jessamine	N	L	Evergreen. Showy. Poisonous.
Hydrangea anomala petiolaris	Climbing hydrangea		L	Slow to establish. Requires support. Showy.
Lonicera japonica	Japanese honeysuckle		H	Can be used as groundcover. Invasive. Weedy.
Lonicera sempervirens	Trumpet honeysuckle	N	L	Requires pruning and support. Showy.
Lonicera x heckerottii	Goldflame honeysuckle		L	Requires support. Showy.
Parthenocissus quinquefolia	Virginia creeper	N	L	Requires support, will cover walls. Tolerates urban conditions.
Parthenocissus tricuspidata	Boston ivy		L	Tolerates urban conditions.
Passiflora incarnata	Passionflower, Maypop	N	L	Requires support, can be used as groundcover. Showy.
Passiflora lutea	Yellow passionflower	N	L	Less showy.
Phytolacca	Poison ivy	N	M	Triggers skin allergies in most people. Invasive.
Polygonum aubertii	Silverlace vine, Fleece vine		L	Very vigorous and adaptable. Showy.
Rosa spp.	Climbing roses		L	High maintenance. Requires support. Showy.
Smilax rotundifolia	Greenbrier, Smilax, Catbrier	N	L	Weedy, invasive. Evergreen forms exist.

Reviewed by David Close, Extension specialist,
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