
Going Native!

Hayes Jackson - Regional Extension Agent, Urban

Native plants are better adapted to our sometimes fickle weather. Natives are often more disease and insect resistant than imported species. Here is a list of native substitutes and a listing of some of my favorite Southeastern native plants that make a fine addition to any landscape.

LOW SHRUBS: Substitute Dwarf Burford, Carissa, and Japanese Hollies with Dwarf Yaupon Holly, or Dwarf Walter's Viburnum

HEDGES OR SCREEN: Substitute Ligustrum or Red Tips with Wax Myrtle or Yellow Anise

SMALL FLOWERING TREE: Substitute Crape myrtle with Fringe Tree (Grancy Gray Beard) or Hawthorns (Crataegus)

MEDIUM FLOWERING TREE: Substitute Bradford Pear with Amelanchier or Native Crab Apple

SHADE TREE: Substitute Japanese Maple with Chalk Maple

SUN VINES: Substitute Climbing Roses with Carolina Jessamine or Coral Honeysuckle

SHADE VINES: Substitute Climbing English Ivy with Climbing Hydrangea (Decumaria)

Some of My Other Favorite Natives:

Florida Leucothoe ~ tall evergreen for shade or part shade, great for florist greenery

Sweet Bay ~ native evergreen magnolia with silvery leaf undersides and lemon scented blooms

Florida Flame Azalea ~ heat tolerant native azalea with yellow to orange blooms

Oakleaf Hydrangea ~ our state wildflower, beautiful in bloom, nice fall color

Alabama Snow-wreath ~ a rare native, similar in flower and form to spiraea

Stewartia ~ white camellia-like blooms and showy bark, needs rich, well drained soil to grow well

Needle Palm ~ hardiest palm in the world, an Alabama native that tolerates sun or shade, wet or dry soil.

Shrub-like and slow growing.

Hemlock ~ North Alabama native conifer that tolerates shady conditions, needs ample water to get established. Often used as a Christmas tree

Red Buckeye ~ small tree with red flower clusters in spring that attract hummingbirds

Bottlebrush Buckeye ~ white bottlebrush blooms in summer, yellow fall color



Chalk Maple



Oakleaf Hydrangea



Bottlebrush Buckeye



Fringe tree



Alabama snow wreath



Sweet Bay



Florida Flame Azalea
