

Deer-Tolerant Ornamental Plants

Living Peacefully with Nature



As shadows lengthen in the late afternoon, deer leave the shelter of the woods in search of food. They inspect your trees, shrubs, and flowers as if they were a buffet table. Nibbling pansies for an appetizer, they progress to azaleas for the main entree. Then it's on to the daylilies for dessert.

All across America, this scene is repeated in countless locations where native areas are being replaced by managed grounds. Nuisance deer are difficult to control in residential communities. There are a number of commercially available repellents on the market, but they tend to wash off with rain and must be re-applied frequently to be effective. Unreliable results have also been obtained from other so-called "home remedy" repellents such as soap, human hair and animal dung. Shooting is often prohibited, and many citizens are opposed to this method of control. Fencing whole communities or individual properties is often not practical.

Planting ornamental plants that deer do not like to eat is a solution to deer browsing. Please remember, though, that **very few plants are totally deer-resistant**. When deer populations are high and food becomes scarce, deer are more likely to feed on ornamental plants. Deer prefer tender new foliage on newly-planted ornamentals and those fertilized to produce lush new growth. During dry weather, deer are attracted to irrigated plants. Buck deer may also cause considerable damage to young trees by rubbing them with their antlers. Repellents will not stop antler rubbing.

The lists that follow may be helpful when selecting ornamental plants for your landscape. They include plants that deer love to eat, plants on which occasional browsing is observed, and plants known to have a high deer tolerance. If your favorite plant is not on the list, information is lacking on its level of deer resistance.

Plants Known to Have a High Degree of Deer Tolerance HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS & BULBS, continued:	
Lespedeza	Soapwort (<i>Saponaria</i>)
Meadow Sage (<i>Salvia</i>)	Society Garlic (<i>Tulbaghia violacea</i>)
Mint (<i>Mentha</i>)	Spurge (<i>Euphorbia</i>)
Monkshood (<i>Aconitum</i>)	Statice (<i>Limonium latifolium</i>)
Montauk Daisy (<i>Nipponanthemum</i>)	Moss Pinks (<i>Phlox Subulata</i>)
Gerbera Daisy (<i>Gerbera jamesonii</i>)	St. John's Wort (<i>Hypericum</i>)
Mullein (<i>Verbascum</i>)	Sweet Woodruff (<i>Galium</i>)
Oregano (<i>Origanum</i>)	Summer Snowflake (<i>Leucojum aestivum</i>)*
Peony (<i>Paeonia</i>)	Tansy (<i>Tanacetum</i>)
Perennial Sunflower (<i>Helianthus</i> spp.)	Thyme (<i>Thymus</i>)
Pinks (<i>Dianthus</i> spp.)	Wild Indigo (<i>Baptisia</i> spp.)
Rose Campion (<i>Lychnis</i>)	Wormwood (<i>Artemisia</i> spp.)
Rosemary (<i>Rosmarinum officinalis</i>)	Yarrow (<i>Achillea</i> spp.)
Shasta Daisy (<i>Chrysanthemum</i> spp.)	

Plants Known to Have a High Degree of Deer Tolerance ANNUALS:	
Ageratum	Melampodium
Alyssum	Morning Glory (<i>Ipomoea</i> spp.)
Annual Periwinkle (<i>Catharanthus alba rosea</i>)	Parsley (<i>Petroselinum</i> spp.)
California Poppy (<i>Eschscholzia californica</i>)	Pentas
Cleome	<i>Plectranthus</i> spp. (Fuzzy leaf forms)
Coreopsis	Poppy (<i>Papaver</i> spp.)
Cornflower (<i>Cenaurea cyanus</i>)	Scarlet Sage (<i>Salvia</i> spp.)
Dusty Miller	Snapdragon (<i>Antirrhinum majus</i>)
Flowering Tobacco (<i>Nicotiana glauca</i>)	Sweet Pea (<i>Ipomoea</i> spp.)
Forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>)	Verbena
Gaillardia (<i>Gaillardia pulchella</i>)	Wax Begonia (<i>Begonia semperflorens</i>)
Lobelia (<i>Lobelia laxiflora</i>)	Zinnia (<i>Zinnia elegans</i>)
Marigold (<i>Tagetes</i> spp.)	



The primary source of information for this brochure is <http://pubs.caes.uga.edu/caespubs/horticulture/deer.html>, an on-line publication prepared by Jeff Jackson, Professor of Wildlife Management and Gary L. Wade, University of Georgia Extension Horticulturist.

**Georgia Mountains
Master Gardeners**



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Plants Deer Love to Eat (Avoid planting these unless you protect them.)	
Aucuba	Hibiscus
Asiatic Lilies	Hosta
Candytuft (Iberis)	Hydrangea
Camellia	Indian Hawthorn
Crabapple	Pansies
Crocus	Rudbeckia (Black-Eyed Susan)
Daylilies	Roses
English Ivy	Sedum 'Autumn Joy'
Fatsia*	Tulips
Grape Hyacinths	Violas

Occasional Browsing Observed on These Plants	
Azaleas	Gazania
Clematis	Holly: Foster #2, East Palatka, Savannah, Lusterleaf, Dwarf Burford
Flowering Dogwood	Red Cedar
Flowering Quince	Redbud
Flowering Kale	Stokes Aster

Plants Known to Have a High Degree of Deer Tolerance TREES:	
Bald Cypress (<i>Taxodium distichum</i>)	Most Hollies (except those above)
Cherry Laurel (<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>)	Palms (Windmill & Needle palms are hardy in N.Ga.)
Crape Myrtle (<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i>)	Pines (<i>Pinus</i> spp.)
Deodar Cedar (<i>Cedrus deodara</i>)	Red Maple (<i>Acer rubrum</i>)
False Cypress (<i>Chamaecyparis</i> spp.)	River Birch (<i>Betula nigra</i>)
Fir (<i>Abies</i> spp.)	Southern Magnolia (<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>)
Ginkgo (<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>)	Spruce (<i>Picea</i> spp.)
Gordonia (<i>Gordonia lisianthus</i>)*	Sweetgum (<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>)*
Leyland Cypress (<i>Cupressocyparis x leylandii</i>)	

Plants Known to Have a High Degree of Deer Tolerance VINES & GROUND COVERS:	
Bugleweed (<i>Ajuga</i> spp.)	Periwinkle (<i>Vinca minor</i>)
Carolina Jessamine (<i>Gelsemium sempervirens</i>)	Trumpetvine (<i>Bignonia capreolata</i>)
Cherokee Rose (<i>Rosa laevigata</i>)	Wisteria (<i>Wisteria</i> spp.)
Honeysuckle (<i>Lonicera sempervirens</i>)	

Plants Known to Have a High Degree of Deer Tolerance SHRUBS:	
Anise (<i>Illicium</i> spp.)	Holly: many species, including Dwarf Yaupon, Japanese Holly, Rotunda, Schellings Dwarf & Inkberry [<i>Ilex glabra</i>]
Banana Shrub (<i>Michelia fuscata</i>)	Japanese Rose (<i>Kerria japonica</i>)
Barberry (<i>Berberis</i> spp.)	Juniper (<i>Juniperus</i> spp.)
Beauty Bush (<i>Kolkwitzia</i>)	Leatherleaf Mahonia (<i>Mahonia bealei</i>)
Bottlebrush Buckeye (<i>Aesculus parviflora</i>)	Oleander (<i>Nerium oleander</i>)
Boxwood (<i>Buxus</i> spp.)	Ornamental grasses (many spp.)
Butterfly Bush (<i>Buddleia davidii</i>)	Plum Yew (<i>Cephalotaxus</i>)
Cotoneaster (<i>Cotoneaster</i> spp.)	Russian Sage (<i>Perovskia</i>)
Eleagnus (<i>Eleagnus pungens</i>)	Spirea (<i>Spiraea</i> spp.)
Firethorn (<i>Pyracantha</i> spp.)	Sumac (<i>Rhus</i>)
Forsythia, yellowbells (<i>Forsythia</i> spp.)	Sweetshrub (<i>Calycanthus floridus</i>)
Gardenia (<i>Gardenia</i> spp.)	Viburnum (<i>Viburnum</i> spp.)
Heavenly Bamboo (<i>Nandina</i> spp.)	Winter Daphne (<i>Daphne</i> spp.)

Plants Known to Have a High Degree of Deer Tolerance HERBACEOUS PERENNIALS & BULBS:	
Adam's Needle (<i>Yucca</i>)	Dahlia (<i>Dahlia</i> spp.)
Allium	Dead Nettles (<i>Lamium</i>)
Amaryllis	Four O'Clocks (<i>Mirabilis jalapa</i>)*
Anise Hyssop (<i>Agastache</i>)	Gloriosa Lily (<i>Gloriosa superba</i>)
Beebalm (<i>Monarda didyma</i>)	Foxglove (<i>Digitalis</i>)
Bleeding Hearts (<i>Dicentra</i>)	Fumewort (<i>Corydalis</i>)
Blue Star (<i>Amsonia</i>)	Garden Sage (<i>Salvia officinalis</i>)
Boltonia (<i>Boltonia asteroides</i>)	Geranium – Hardy, Scented Geranium; Cranesbill
Bugbane (<i>Cimicifuga</i>)	Germander (<i>Teucrium</i>)
Butterfly Weed (<i>Asclepias</i>)	Goldenrod (<i>Solidago</i> spp.)
Calamint (<i>Calamintha</i>)	Grasses – Ornamental grass & Carex
Cardinal Flower (<i>Lobelia</i> spp.)	Hyssop (<i>Hyssopus</i>)
Catmint (<i>Nepeta catarina</i>)	Iris (<i>Iris</i> spp.)
Christmas Fern (<i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>)	Lady's Mantle (<i>Alchemilla</i>)
Cinnamon Fern (<i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>)	Lamb's Ear (<i>Stachys</i>)
Columbine (<i>Aquilegia</i>)	Lantana (<i>Lantana camara</i>)
Coneflower (<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>)	Lavender (<i>Lavandula</i>)
Crinum Lily	Lemon Balm (<i>Melissa</i>)
Daffodils	Lenten Rose (<i>Helleborus orientalis</i>)

*These are plants we do not currently carry, but you may already have them in your yard.