

Native Ground Covers, Vines, and Herbaceous Perennials for Riparian Buffers in Northern New Jersey Watersheds

NAME	DECID/ EVERGR	HEIGHT	LIGHT PREFERENCE		SOIL PREFERENCE			WILDLIFE HABITAT & FOOD VALUE	ORNAMENTAL VALUE
			full/ part shade	full sun	dry	moist	flood tolerant		
Riverbank grape <i>Vitis riparia</i>	d	25'	x	x		x	x	very high - fruits a favorite of turkeys, grouse, wood duck, pileated woodpeckers, & mammals inc. bear	vines useful for making wreaths
Virginia creeper, woodbine <i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>	d	25'	x	x	x	x		moderate - provides cover; pileated woodpecker, crested flycatcher, vireo	foliage - good cover for walls and rockpiles when leafed out
Partridgeberry <i>Mitchella repens</i>	e	2"	x		x	x		high - berries eaten by grouse & mammals	dark green, glossy foliage; paired white in June; bright red berries in late summer, fall
Bearberry <i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	e	1'		x	x			high - fruits	handsome foliage; good ground cover
Wintergreen <i>Gaultheria procumbens</i>	e	4"	x			x		high - fruits	flowers, fruits, glossy aromatic foliage
Blue flag iris <i>Iris versicolor</i>	d	1-3'		x		x	x	low	showy purple-blue flowers in late spring
Swano milkweed <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	d	2'		x		x		very high - one of most important butterfly plants; monarchs rely exclusively on it; hummingbirds & many other insects use flower nectar	fragrant pink-purple flowers; distinctive seed pods useful for decorations
Blue-eyed grasses <i>Sisyrinchium spp.</i>	d	1'		x	x	x		low	stiff, grass-like plants with blue-violet flowers
Ginseng <i>Panax quinquefolius</i>	d	8-16"	x			x		low	woodland wildflower of pharmaceutical interest. Wild populations are suffering from over-collecting, but cultivated plants could be harvested from a forested riparian buffer.
Bunchberry <i>Cornus canadensis</i>	e	6"	x			x		high - fruits eaten by birds and mammals	showy white spring flowers and red summer berries, purplish fall color; excellent ground cover
Foamflower <i>Tiarella cordifolia</i>	d	1'	x			x		low	small star-like flowers in a loose spike
Twinflower <i>Linnaea borealis</i>	e	6"	x			x		low	trailing plant; white and pink paired flowers
Marsh marigold <i>Caltha palustris</i>	d	1-2'		x		x	x	low	early yellow flowers
Whorled loosestrife <i>Lysimachia quadrifolia</i>	d	4'	x	x	x	x		low	yellow flowers with red markings; attractive foliage; not related to invasive purple loosestrife
Cardinal flower <i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	d	2-4'	x	x		x	x	high - hummingbirds attracted to flowers	brilliant red flowers
Blue false indigo <i>Baptisia australis</i>	d	3-4'	x	x	x	x		low	large dark blue or violet flowers
Joe pye weed <i>Eupatorium purpureum</i>	d	5-6'		x		x	x	high - butterflies are attracted to flowers	large flat-topped cluster of fuzzy purple flowers
Boneset <i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>	d	4-6'		x	x	x		high - attracts butterflies & other insects	white flowers
Wild lupine <i>Lupinus perennis</i>	d	1-3'			x	x	x	low	purple-blue flower spires in June; attractive foliage

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Harebell <i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	d	1'	x		x			low	delicate wildflower with blue-lavender bell shaped flowers
Jewelweed <i>Impatiens capensis</i>	d	1-3'	x	x			x	high - favored by hummingbirds	orange flowers in summer; seed capsules burst when touched; juice of plant said to help defend against exposure to poison ivy
Daisy <i>Chrysanthemum leucanthemum</i>	d	1-4'		x	x	x		moderate - seeds favored by finches; common nectar source for butterflies	familiar white ray flower with yellow center
Goldenrod <i>Solidago spp.</i>	d	1-5'		x	x	x		moderate - seeds eaten by finches; nectar by butterflies	many species of wildflowers in midsummer to early fall; all except silverrod are yellow
New England aster <i>Aster novae-angliae</i>	d	5'		x	x	x		high - seeds used by songbirds; attracts butterflies	late summer/fall purple flowers with yellow centers
Christmas fern <i>Polystichum acrostichoides</i>	e	1'	x		x	x		low	evergreen ground cover; glossy foliage
Hay-scented fern <i>Dennstaedtia punctilobula</i>	d	2'	x	x	x	x		low	fragrant light-green foliage; spreads well, forms pure stands; tolerates full sun
Bracken fern <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	d	2-3'	x	x	x			low	sturdy foliage; tolerates full sun
Cinnamon fern <i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>	d	3-4'	x				x	low	vase-shaped clusters; handsome foliage; cinnamon colored fertile fronds
Royal fern <i>Osmunda regalis</i> "	d	6'	x	x			x	low	handsome foliage; new crosiers edible as "fiddle heads"
Interrupted fern <i>Osmunda claytoniana</i>	d	3-4'	x				x	low	vase-shaped clusters
Sensitive fern <i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	d	2'	x	x			x	low	fertile fronds used in dried arrangements
Cattail <i>Typha latifolia</i>	d	6'		x			x	high - seed heads valuable food for birds	strap shaped leaves; brown seed head is distinctive and often used in horticultural arrangements
Reed grass <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>	d	5'		x			x	moderate	attractive grass forms clumps, stabilizes soils well
Pennsylvania sedge <i>Carex pensylvanica</i>	d	2'	x	x	x			low	forms low turf on sunny dry soils, or under woodland canopy
Tussock sedge <i>Carex stricta</i>	d	4'	x	x			x	moderate - food for sparrows, grouse, snipe, others	forms clumps or tussocks
Rattlesnake manna grass <i>Glyceria canadensis</i>	d	3'	x	x			x	moderate	grass with delicate and distinctive inflorescence; plant in clusters where no competition by others is likely
Rice cutgrass <i>Leersia oryzoides</i>	d	5'		x			x	high - food for waterfowl; cover for fish, reptiles, amphibians	attractive seed head
Tufted hair grass <i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i>	d	4'					x	moderate	attractive seed head
Canada Wild Rye <i>Elymus canadensis</i>	d	3'	x	x			x	high - seeds produce food for small mammals, songbirds, and gamebirds; mature stands provide cover	attractive seed head

adapted from *Riparian Buffers in Northern New Jersey Watersheds*