

Plants not favored by deer

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In a matter of moments, a hungry deer can destroy a prized garden specimen, taking with it the time spent selecting, planting, and caring for the plant. This happens all too often in Wisconsin and is the result of an increasing deer population trying to survive in a shrinking natural habitat. As food becomes scarce—particularly in winter and early spring—deer seek out alternative food sources such as ornamental plants grown near woodlands. Feeding damage can kill young plants and permanently ruin the shape of mature plants.



How can you avoid deer browsing? If deer are hungry enough, they will eat almost anything. However, there are a number of woody and herbaceous plants that deer usually don't find appealing. Many of these plants are listed below, though this list is not definitive as deer preferences vary by region. Deer in your area may be attracted to some of the plants listed below and they may avoid some plants that aren't included here. The best long-term strategy may be to note which plants they seem to favor or avoid in your yard or neighborhood and plant accordingly. Remember, though, that in severe conditions all plants are vulnerable to deer browsing.

Deciduous trees

Alnus glutinosa (European black alder)
Amelanchier x grandiflora (apple serviceberry)
Betula nigra (river birch)
Betula papyrifera (paper birch)
Carpinus caroliniana (American hornbeam)
Catalpa speciosa (northern catalpa)
Cornus kousa (kousa dogwood)
Cotinus obovatus (American smoketree)
Crataegus spp. (hawthorn)
Elaeagnus angustifolia (Russian olive)
Fagus spp. (beech)
Fraxinus americana (white ash)
Fraxinus pennsylvanica (green ash)
Ginkgo biloba (ginkgo)
Gleditsia triacanthos var. *inermis* (thornless honeylocust)

Gymnocladus dioica (Kentucky coffeetree)
Larix spp. (larch)
Liriodendron tulipifera (tuliptree)
Magnolia spp. (magnolia)
Metasequoia glyptostroboides (dawn redwood)
Nyssa sylvatica (black gum, tupelo, sour gum)
Ostrya virginiana (American hophornbeam)
Platanus occidentalis (American sycamore)
Robinia pseudoacacia (black locust)
Salix matsudana 'Tortuosa' (corkscrew willow)
Sassafras albidum (sassafras)
Sophora japonica (Japanese pagodatree)
Stewartia pseudocamellia (Japanese stewartia)
Syringa reticulata (Japanese tree lilac)
Taxodium distichum (bald cypress)



Antler damage

Plantings are also vulnerable to damage caused in the fall by bucks rubbing their antlers along tree trunks and branches. This behavior strips off bark, creating large wounds on the plant where disease organisms can enter. Unfortunately, bucks seem to show no preference for plant species. To protect plants against this type of damage, fencing or repellents will be needed. See Extension publication *Controlling Deer Damage in Wisconsin* (G3083) for details.

Evergreens

Abies concolor (concolor fir, white fir)
Juniperus chinensis (Chinese juniper)
Juniperus communis (common juniper)
Picea abies (Norway spruce)
Picea glauca (white spruce)
Picea pungens f. *glauca*
(Colorado blue spruce)
Pinus mugo (mugo pine)
Pinus nigra (Austrian pine)
Pinus resinosa (red pine, Norway pine)
Thuja plicata (western red-cedar)

Vines

Akebia quinata (fiveleaf akebia)
Campsis radicans (trumpet creeper)
Celastrus scandens
(American bittersweet)
Lonicera sempervirens
(trumpet honeysuckle)
Parthenocissus quinquefolia
(Virginia creeper)
Parthenocissus tricuspidata (Boston ivy)
Polygonum aubertii (silver lace vine)
Wisteria macrostachys
(Kentucky wisteria)



Shrubs

Abeliophyllum distichum
(white forsythia)
Berberis koreana (Korean barberry)
Berberis thunbergii (Japanese barberry)
Buddleja davidii (butterfly bush)
Buxus microphylla var. *koreana*
(Korean boxwood)
Caryopteris x clandonensis
(bluemist spirea)
Clethra alnifolia (summersweet clethra)
Calycanthus floridus (Carolina allspice)
Chionanthus virginicus (fringetree)
Cotinus coggygria (smokebush)
Daphne x burkwoodii 'Carol Mackie'
(Carol Mackie daphne)
Dirca palustris (leatherwood)
Forsythia spp. (forsythia)
Hibiscus syriacus (Rose-of-Sharon)
Ilex glabra (inkberry)
Ilex verticillata (winterberry)
Kerria japonica (Japanese kerria)
Kolkwitzia amabilis (beautybush)
Lindera benzoin (spicebush)
Mahonia aquifolium
(Oregon grapeholly)
Myrica pensylvanica
(northern bayberry)
Pieris japonica (Japanese pieris)
Potentilla fruticosa (potentilla)
Rosa rugosa (rugosa rose)
Shepherdia argentea
(silver buffaloberry)
Spiraea japonica (Japanese spirea)
Symphoricarpos albus
(common snowberry)
Symphoricarpos orbiculatus
(Indiandcurrant coralberry)
Syringa vulgaris (common lilac)
Vitex agnus-castus (chastetree)

Groundcovers

Aegopodium podagraria
(goutweed, bishop's weed)
Alchemilla mollis (lady's mantle)
Ajuga reptans (ajuga, bugleweed)
Arabis caucasica (rock cress)
Asarum canadense
(Canadian wildginger)
Aubrieta deltoidea (false rock cress)
Cerastium tomentosum
(snow-in-the-summer)
Convallaria majalis (lily-of-the-valley)
Epimedium spp. (bishop's cap,
barrenwort)
Galium odoratum (sweet woodruff)
Iberis sempervirens
(evergreen candytuft)
Juniperus spp. (juniper)
Lamium maculatum
(spotted dead nettle)
Liriope spicata (creeping lily turf)
Pachysandra terminalis
(Japanese pachysandra)
Potentilla tridentata
(wineleaf cinquefoil)
Vinca minor (periwinkle, myrtle)
Waldsteinia fragarioides
(barren strawberry)
Waldsteinia ternata
(Siberian barren strawberry)

Bulbs

Allium spp. (allium)
Chionodoxa luciliae (glory-of-the-snow)
Colchicum speciosum (autumn crocus,
colchicum)
Eranthis hyemalis (winter aconite)
Fritillaria imperialis (crown imperial)
Galanthus nivalis (common snowdrop)
Leucojum vernum (spring snowflake)
Muscari spp. (grape hyacinth)
Narcissus spp. (daffodil)
Puschkinia scilloides (striped squill)
Scilla siberica (Siberian squill)

Herbaceous perennials

Achillea spp. (yarrow)
Aconitum spp. (monkshood)
Amsonia tabernaemontana
 (willow amsonia)
Anaphalis triplinervis
 (pearly everlasting)
Anchusa azurea (Italian bugloss)
Anemone spp. (anemone)
Anthemis tinctoria
 (hardy golden marguerite)
Aquilegia spp. (columbine)
Armeria maritima (sea thrift)
Artemisia spp. (wormwood, artemisia)
Asclepias tuberosa (butterfly weed)
Astilbe spp. (astilbe)
Baptisia spp. (false indigo)
Bergenia cordifolia (bergenia)
Boltonia asteroides (boltonia)
Brunnera macrophylla
 (Siberian bugloss)
Caltha palustris (marsh marigold)
Centaurea spp. (cornflower, knap-
 weed)
Ceratostigma plumbaginoides
 (plumbago)
Chelone lyonii (turtlehead)
Cimicifuga racemosa (black snakeroot)
Coreopsis spp. (coreopsis)
Crococsmia x crocosmiiflora (crococsmia)
Cynoglossum nervosum
 (hairy hound's tongue)
Delphinium spp. (delphinium)
Dianthus spp. (pinks)
Dicentra spp. (bleeding heart)
Dictamnus albus (gas plant)
Digitalis spp. (foxglove, biennial)
Dryopteris spp. (wood fern)
Echinacea purpurea
 (purple coneflower)
Echinops ritro (globe thistle)
Erigeron x hybridus (fleabane daisy)
Eupatorium purpureum (Joe-pye weed)
Euphorbia spp. (spurge)
Filipendula vulgaris (meadowsweet)

Gaillardia x grandiflora (blanketflower)
Gentiana septemfida (crested gentian)
Geum spp. (avens)
Gypsophila paniculata (baby's breath)
Helenium autumnale (sneezeweed)
Helleborus spp. (hellebore)
Heuchera spp. (coral bells)
Hibiscus spp. (hibiscus, mallow)
Hyacinthoides hispanica
 (Spanish bluebells)
Hypericum spp. (St. Johnswort)
Iris spp. (iris)
Kniphofia spp. (red-hot poker)
Lavandula angustifolia (lavender)
Leucanthemum x superbum
 (shasta daisy)
Liatris spicata (gayfeather)
Ligularia spp. (ligularia)
Linaria spp. (toad flax)
Linum perenne (perennial flax)
Lupinus spp. (lupine)
Lychnis coronaria (rose campion)
Lysimachia nummularia
 (creeping Jenny)
Macleaya cordata (plume poppy)
Matteuccia struthiopteris (ostrich fern)
Mertensia virginica (Virginia bluebells)
Monarda spp. (beebalm)
Myosotis sylvatica (forget-me-not)
Oenothera spp. (evening primrose)
Papaver orientale (Oriental poppy)
Penstemon spp. (beardtongue,
 penstemon)
Perovskia atriplicifolia (Russian sage)
Physostegia virginiana (obedient plant)
Podophyllum peltatum (mayapple)
Polemonium caeruleum (Jacob's ladder)
Polygonatum spp. (Solomon's seal)
Primula spp. (primrose)
Pteridium aquilinum (bracken fern)
Pulmonaria spp. (lungwort)
Pulsatilla vulgaris (pasque flower)
Rudbeckia fulgida (orange coneflower)
Salvia x superba (perennial salvia)
Saponaria ocymoides (rock soapwort)
Scabiosa spp. (pincushion flower)

Sedum kamtschaticum
 (yellow stone crop)
Sempervivum tectorum
 (hen-and-chickens)
Solidago spp. (goldenrod)
Stachys byzantina (lamb's ear)
Stokesia laevis (Stoke's aster)
Tanacetum coccineum (painted daisy)
Tiarella cordifolia (foamflower)
Tradescantia virginiana (spiderwort)
Valeriana officinalis (valerian)
Veronica spp. (speedwell)
Woodwardia areolata (chain fern)

Annuals

Ageratum houstonianum (ageratum)
Amaranthus tricolor
 (Joseph's coat amaranth)
Antirrhinum majus (snapdragon)
Begonia semperflorens-cultorum hybrids
 (wax begonia)
Brugmansia spp. (datura,
 angel's trumpet)
Calendula officinalis (pot marigold)
Capsicum annuum (ornamental pepper)
Catharanthus roseus (periwinkle)
Cleome hassleriana (spider flower)
Cosmos bipinnatus (cosmos)
Cynoglossum amabile (Chinese
 forget-me-not, biennial)
Dahlia spp. (dahlia)
Euphorbia marginata
 (snow-on-the-mountain)
Gaillardia pulchella (blanket flower)
Gomphrena globosa (globe amaranth)
Helichrysum bracteatum (strawflower)
Heliotropium arborescens (heliotrope)
Hypoestes phyllostachya
 (polka-dot plant)
Ipomoea alba (moonflower)
Ipomoea purpurea (morning glory)
Lantana spp. (lantana)
Lobelia erinus (edging lobelia)
Lobularia maritima (sweet alyssum)
Matthiola incana (stock)
Mirabilis jalapa (four o'clock)

Mimulus spp. (mimulus, monkey flower)
Nierembergia hippomanica var. *violacea* (cupflower)
Ricinus communis (castor bean)
Salvia farinacea (blue salvia)
Salvia viridis (painted salvia)
Sanvitalia procumbens (creeping sanvitalia)
Senecio cineraria (dusty miller)
Tagetes patula (French marigold)
Tagetes tenuifolia (signet marigold)
Tithonia rotundifolia (tithonia)
Tropaeolum majus (nasturtium)
Verbena x hybrida (garden verbena)
Zinnia angustifolia (narrowleaf zinnia)
Zinnia elegans (zinnia)

Herbs

Allium spp. (chives)
Anethum graveolens (dill)
Angelica archangelica (angelica)
Borago officinalis (borage)
Foeniculum vulgare (fennel)
Hyssopus officinalis (hyssop)
Levisticum officinale (lovage)
Marrubium vulgare (horehound)
Matricaria recutita (chamomile)
Melissa officinalis (lemon balm)
Mentha x piperita (peppermint)
Mentha spicata (spearmint)
Nepeta x faassenii (catmint)
Ocimum basilicum (sweet basil)
Origanum vulgare (oregano)
Perilla frutescens (perilla)
Petroselinum crispum (parsley)
Rosmarinus officinalis (rosemary)
Ruta graveolens (common rue)
Salvia officinalis (common sage)
Sanguisorba spp. (burnet)
Santolina chamaecyparissus (lavender cotton)
Satureja montana (winter savory)

Symphytum spp. (comfrey)
Tanacetum parthenium (feverfew)
Tanacetum vulgare (tansy)
Teucrium chamaedrys (wall germander)
Thymus spp. (thyme)
Verbascum spp. (mullein)

Grasses

Calamagrostis x acutiflora 'Karl Foerster' (feather reed grass)
Carex spp. (sedge)
Chasmanthium latifolium (northern sea oats)
Erianthus ravennae (tall ravenna grass)
Festuca cinerea (blue fescue)
Luzula nivea (snowy wood rush)
Miscanthus sinensis (miscanthus, silver grass)
Pennisetum alopecuroides (fountain grass)
Sisyrinchium striatum (blue-eyed grass)
Stipa pennata (feather grass)

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