



GREEN SPRING GARDENS

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RECOMMENDED EVERGREEN TREES AND LARGE EVERGREEN SHRUBS FOR THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

Evergreen trees are valued for their year-round beauty and shelter for wildlife, as well as providing other environmental benefits and screening unwanted views. A few species are also wonderful shade trees, such as loblolly pine. Tree selection and placement should be done carefully – trees are dominant features in the landscape due to their stature and potential for long life.

Evergreens are often grouped into two categories, broadleaf evergreens and conifers. Broadleaf evergreens have broad, flat leaves. They also may have showy flowers, such as the southern magnolia, or colorful fruits, such as the Nellie R. Stevens holly. Coniferous evergreens either have needle-like foliage, such as the eastern white pine, or scale-like foliage, such as the California incense cedar. Conifers do not have true flowers or fruits but bear cones. Though most conifers are evergreen, exceptions exist. Bald cypress and dawn redwood, for example, lose their needles each fall.

The following are useful definitions:

- Border - a bed that is longer than wide and planted with trees, shrubs, herbaceous perennials, and/or other types of plants. May be backed by walls, fences, or hedges and is chiefly viewed from one side. Free-standing island beds are a variation on the border.
- Cultivar (cv.) - a cultivated variety designated by single quotes, such as 'Bracken's Brown Beauty'. A **variety (var.)** or **subspecies (subsp.)**, in contrast, is found in nature and is a subdivision of a species.
- Full Sun – 6 hours or more of sunlight daily.
- Naturalistic Use - native plants that, when properly sited, perform well with minimal care; best used in an informal design that suggests a natural landscape.
- Part Shade - the amount of light in an area shaded part of the day, among deciduous trees with high branches, among deciduous trees with foliage that is not heavy, or among thinned deciduous woods.
- Specimen - an ornamental plant situated alone in a prominent, uncrowded space.

The following is a list of evergreen trees and large shrubs that perform well in the Washington, D.C. area. Recommended cultivars are noted after the scientific name. Plants that are generally grown as shrubs are noted. Most of these plants prefer moist, well-drained sites but will tolerate dry sites. Light requirements, suggested uses, and special cultural requirements or tolerances are listed in the comments column. **Species native to Virginia are highlighted in red and marked with an asterisk (*)**.

[Gold Medal Plant Awards are given annually by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society to

<p><i>Pinus</i> –</p> <p>Native species: <i>Pinus strobus</i>* & ‘Fastigiata’ [Gold Medal Award – narrower habit than the species type] (For smaller cultivars - see the evergreen shrub information sheet)</p> <p><i>P. taeda</i>*</p> <p><i>P. virginiana</i>*</p> <p>Non-native species: <i>P. wallichiana</i></p>	<p>Eastern White Pine</p> <p>Loblolly Pine</p> <p>Virginia Pine</p> <p>Himalayan Pine, Bhutan Pine</p>	<p>Specimen, groups, or naturalistic use; salt intolerant; full sun</p> <p>Specimen, shade tree, groups, or naturalistic use; full sun</p> <p>Shade tree, groups, or naturalistic use; full sun; less showy than the above native species but very tough</p> <p>Specimen or groups; full sun</p>
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MEDIUM-SIZED EVERGREEN TREES (30-60 FEET TALL)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comments
<p><i>Ilex opaca</i>* [Gold Medal Award] (‘Jersey Delight’ - emale cultivar) Male pollinator, such as ‘Jersey Knight’, needed for fruit production.</p> <p>(For smaller cultivars - see the evergreen shrub information sheet)</p>	American Holly	Specimen, border, groups, screen, or naturalistic use; full sun to part shade
<p><i>Juniperus virginiana</i>*</p> <p>Smaller cultivars (more shrub-like): Emerald Sentinel (‘Corcorcor’) [Gold Medal Award; a female] & ‘Hillspire’ (‘Cupressifolia’)</p>	Eastern Red Cedar	Groups, screen, border, or naturalistic use; full sun; usually separate female & male plants but sometimes both sexes on the same plant

<p><i>Pinus bungeana</i></p> <p><i>P. koraiensis</i></p> <p><i>P. parviflora</i> & many cultivars such as 'Gimborn's Ideal' (For smaller cultivars - see the evergreen shrub information sheet)</p>	<p>Lacebark Pine</p> <p>Korean Pine</p> <p>Japanese White Pine</p>	<p>Specimen, border, or groups; full sun</p> <p>Specimen, screen, border, or groups; full sun; salt tolerant</p>
<p><i>Thuja</i> 'Green Giant' [Gold Medal Award; <i>T. standishii</i> × <i>plicata</i> hybrid]. A similar plant is Spring Grove ('Grovepli'). 'Steeplechase' is a branch sport of 'Green Giant'.</p> <p>These plants are superior to leyland cypress in many situations (X <i>Cupressocyparis leylandii</i>) – leyland cypress is susceptible to canker in dry areas & is overused in local landscapes.</p> <p>For a slower-growing variegated tree in our area: <i>Thuja plicata</i> 'Zebrina'. A good green-foliaged cultivar of this species is 'Atrovirens'.</p>	<p>Western Arborvitae Hybrids</p> <p>Western Arborvitae, Western Red Cedar</p>	<p>Specimen, screen, groups, or border; full sun to light shade</p>

SMALL EVERGREEN TREES AND LARGE EVERGREEN SHRUBS (12-30 FEET TALL)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comments
<p><i>Buxus sempervirens</i> (large shrub).</p> <p>(For smaller forms - see the evergreen shrubs information sheet).</p>	<p>Common Boxwood</p>	<p>Hedge or screen; full sun to light shade</p>
<p><i>Camellia oleifera</i> ('Lu Shan Snow'; large shrub).</p> <p>(For smaller cultivars - see the evergreen shrub information sheet.)</p>	<p>Tea-oil Camellia</p>	<p>Specimen, groups, or border; light shade to part shade</p>

<p><i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i> ‘Crippsii’</p> <p>(For smaller cultivars – see the evergreen shrub information sheet)</p> <p><i>C. thyoides</i>* ‘Glauca Pendula’ (this cultivar has blue foliage & is more formal looking than the species)</p>	<p>Crippsii Hinoki Falsecypress</p> <p>Glauca Pendula Atlantic White Cedar</p>	<p>Specimen, groups, screen, or border; full sun to light shade; prefers moist soil</p> <p>Border; the wild type is best for naturalistic use; moist or wet sites</p>
<p><i>Ilex x attenuata</i></p> <p>Male <i>I. opaca</i>* plants pollinate this hybrid. One parent of this hybrid is a VA native (<i>I. opaca</i>*) & the other parent is a native of NC & other southeastern states (<i>I. cassine</i>).</p> <p><i>I. x koehneana</i> (‘Wirt L. Winn’ - female, ‘Ajax’ - male pollinator)</p> <p><i>I.</i> ‘Mary Nell’</p> <p>Ilex Red Holly Hybrids - created using the above cultivar as a parent. Relatively new in the nursery trade - cultivars include Robin (‘Conin’) & Oak Leaf (‘Conaf’).</p> <p><i>I.</i> ‘Nellie R. Stevens’</p>	<p>Foster’s Holly</p> <p>Koehne Holly</p> <p>Mary Nell Holly</p> <p>Red Holly Hybrids</p> <p>Nellie R. Stevens Holly</p>	<p>Specimen, border, screen, hedge, or groups; full sun to part shade</p> <p>Border or screen; full sun to part shade</p> <p>Border, screen, or groups; full sun to part shade</p> <p>Border, screen, groups, or hedge; full sun to part shade; sets fruit without a male plant for pollination</p>
<p><i>Juniperus chinensis</i> ‘Torulosa’ (‘Kaizuka’), ‘Robusta Green’, & ‘Wintergreen’</p> <p>(For smaller cultivars - see the evergreen shrub information sheet)</p>	<p>Chinese Juniper Cultivars</p>	<p>Border, groups, screen, or specimen; full sun</p>

<p><i>Magnolia virginiana</i>* (deciduous to evergreen; our native forms are usually semi-evergreen)</p> <p>Moonglow ('Jim Wilson') is a very hardy cultivar that can be grown further north than most forms.</p> <p>Evergreen types: 'Henry Hicks' & var. <i>australis</i> remain evergreen at colder temperatures than our local forms. <i>M. virginiana</i> var. <i>australis</i> is taller than 'Henry Hicks'. The name var. <i>australis</i> is no longer used by USDA botanists; it's a form from the Deep South that is more tree-like. At Green Spring var. <i>australis</i> looks worse at the end of very cold winters than 'Henry Hicks'.</p>	<p>Sweet Bay Magnolia</p>	<p>Specimen, groups, border, or naturalistic use in moist to wet soils; full sun to part shade</p> <p>Note: Semi-evergreen foliage is green only part of the winter or only part of the foliage is fully evergreen</p>
<p><i>Thuja occidentalis</i>* & cultivars: Emerald ('Smaragd'; synonym is Emerald Green), 'Lutea' (synonym is 'George Peabody'), 'Nigra', 'Rushmore', & 'Wintergreen'</p> <p>(For smaller cultivars - see the evergreen shrub information sheet)</p>	<p>Eastern Arborvitae</p>	<p>Border, screen, or hedge; full sun; Emerald & 'Rushmore' are smaller plants & more shrub-like than the other cultivars</p>

A Note about Scientific Names:

Current names are from the **International Plant Names Index** (IPNI; www.ipni.org/index.html) and/or the **USDA PLANTS Database** (<http://plants.usda.gov/>; this website also has many photographs of native plants). If a second scientific name is given, it is usually an old name that is still seen in some references or used by some nurseries. The **Missouri Botanical Garden** is also an excellent reference for plant names, gardening information, and photographs: the **Kemper Center for Home Gardening Plantfinder** features plants in their Kemper Center display gardens and is one of my favorite websites about ornamental plants (www.mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder/alpha.asp). Another resource is their plant name database for plants throughout the world at **w³TROPICOS** (<http://mobot.mobot.org/W3T/Search/vast.html>).

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