

TREES AND SHRUBS FOR WET SITES

TREES-

Some tree species grow very well in wet soil, because they can thrive in the wet environment, as they tend to use a lot of water to grow. It is for this reason that these trees are good selections to use as focal centers for raingardens, or used to “dry up” poorly drained sites. Most “wet site” trees grow rapidly, so plan accordingly when selecting a planting site and design. The following list is only suggestive but is based on knowledge of tree biology and observations of site mitigation. When selecting a tree, make sure you consider its mature height and spread, and if it will survive in your growing region. There are several other trees that might work in your situation. The following list is not all inclusive, it is only a random sampling of wet site trees from our region.

1. Bald Cypress
2. Pond Cypress
3. Freeman Maple
4. Red Maple
5. Silver Maple
6. Nuttall Oak
7. Pin Oak
8. Swamp White Oak
9. London Plane Tree
10. Sycamore
11. Swamp Cottonwood
12. River Birch
13. Tupelo Gum
14. Swamp Tupelo
15. Water Tupelo
16. Willow
17. Pear

SHRUBS-

Shrubs are multi-stemmed plants that grow thicker trunks and have woody bark. They tend to grow from 3-30' tall at maturity and work well to blend trees with smaller native plantings or add multiple points of interest in a landscape. Shrubs can be used to "fill" voids in the landscape or to help mitigate drainage issues. Although there are not as many wet site shrubs as there are trees, horticulturists have done a lot of work propagating several different varieties of the few species there are to choose from. Many of the options readily available are not truly native shrubs, but they are moisture tolerant and blend well with native plantings.

1. Indigo Bush
2. Buttonbush
3. American Elderberry- multiple varieties
4. Red Twig Dogwood- multiple varieties
5. Winterberry (Christmas Holly)- multiple varieties
6. Grey Dogwood
7. Red Chokeberry
8. Willows- multiple shrub varieties- as well as tree varieties

These lists are designed as a point of reference. Use the trees and shrubs listed to help decide for yourself the colors and growth characteristics that you want to see in your landscape. It is a good practice to ask for a second opinion about planting stock, as some people are more familiar than others about local environments and plant growth in our area.