

Tried and True Native Plants To Replace Invasive Plants



Best Bets: Plants
for Particular Uses
in the Mid-Atlantic

INVASIVE PLANTS:

Sweet Cherry & Higan Cherry
(*Prunus avium* & *P. subhirtella*)



While some non-native ornamental cherry trees, such as Yoshino and Kwanzan, bear little or no fruit, other exotic fruit-bearing members of the *Prunus* genus, which have been introduced and cultivated since colonial times, naturalize from gardens into the wild. Sweet Cherry and Higan Cherry are now listed as invasive in Northern Virginia and 13 counties in Maryland, with other alien cherry species considered a threat.

Problems	Higan Cherry & Black Cherry
Found in woodland edges, hedgerows, and forest interiors	
Shade out forest understories	
Can form monoculture stands, displacing native cherry species with similar habitat requirements	
Hybridize with native cherry species	
Birds and squirrels spread seeds from fruit	
Serve as hosts for diseases that affect orchards and ornamental plantings	
Host insects such as peach tree borer	
Contain glycosides toxic to some animals	
Desired Characteristics	
Tree with spring blossoms and fruit	
Native Alternatives	
(Replacement for fruit:)	
<i>Prunus americana</i> (American Wild Plum)	
Prunus serotina (Black Cherry)	
(Replacement for blossoms:)	
Amelanchier arborea (Downy Serviceberry)	
Cornus florida (Flowering Dogwood)	
developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria	

Images by MPF, Wikipedia (top) and Elaine Mills, Rockville