



# Tried and True Native Plants To Replace Invasive Plants

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

## INVASIVE PLANT: Japanese Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*)



This native of Japan was introduced to the U. S. in 1875 when it was promoted for use in hedgerows. It is still widely used for that purpose due to its resistance to deer browsing. As early as 1910, it was observed to be escaping from cultivation, and it now poses a threat to forests and parkland from New England to North Carolina. Both Alexandria and Arlington list it as invasive.

Problems	Japanese Barberry & Ninebark Cultivar
Invasive spread by berries and creeping roots	
Forms dense thickets in forests and fields	
Raises soil pH and reduces litter layer in forests	
Has competitive edge over native plants as deer do not eat it	
Nursery for deer ticks which spread Lyme disease	
Thorny branches make pruning a challenge	
Desired Characteristics	
Mid-size shrub with arching branches and fruit	
Native Alternatives	
<a href="#"><i>Callicarpa americana</i> (American Beauty-berry)</a>	
<a href="#"><i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i> (Buttonbush)</a>	
<a href="#"><i>Ilex verticillata</i> (Winterberry)</a>	
<a href="#"><i>Itea virginica</i> (Virginia Sweetspire)</a>	
<a href="#"><i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i> (Common Ninebark)</a>	
<i>Rosa carolina</i> (Pasture Rose)	
<i>Rosa palustris</i> (Swamp Rose)	
<a href="#"><i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i> (Highbush Blueberry)</a>	
developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria	

Images by Elaine Mills, Arlington and Brookside Gardens