

# Tried and True Native Plants To Replace Invasive Plants

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

## INVASIVE PLANTS: Privets (*Ligustrum japonicum* & *L. sinense*)



First introduced from Asia in 1852 as ornamentals, this group of shrubs was used extensively for privacy hedging before their invasive characteristics were discovered. Now they disrupt native plant communities in the understory of forests throughout the southeastern U. S., including Virginia. Both Arlington County and Alexandria list these species as invasive.

Problems	Japanese Privet & Possum-haw
Have escaped cultivation and spread throughout eastern U. S.	
Extremely aggressive and shade-tolerant	
Form impenetrable thickets to crowd out more desirable native plants	
Prolific producers of seed, which is spread far by animals	
Also spread by suckers	
Difficult to control as roots re-sprout after parent plant is killed	
Desired Characteristics	
Dense shrub with glossy leaves	
Native Alternatives	
<a href="#"><u><i>Aronia melanocarpa</i> (Black Chokeberry)</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u><i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i> (Buttonbush)</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u><i>Ilex glabra</i> (Inkberry)</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u><i>Lindera benzoin</i> (Spicebush)</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u><i>Viburnum nudum</i> (Possum-haw)</u></a>	
<a href="#"><u><i>Viburnum prunifolium</i> (Black Haw)</u></a>	
developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria	

Images by Elaine Mills, Arlington and Meadowlark Botanical Gardens