




Rhus aromatica 'Gro-Low'

Fragrant Sumac

Tried and True
Native Plant Selections
for the Mid-Atlantic



This vigorous, ground-hugging shrub makes an excellent ground cover, suckering and filling in areas quickly. Its glossy foliage turns brilliant reds, oranges, yellows and purples in fall. At first glance, it may look like poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*), but Fragrant Sumac is not poisonous. It occurs more commonly in the mountains of the Mid-Atlantic Region* than in the Piedmont.

Ground Cover	Flowers, Early Fall Foliage, Mid-Fall Hedge
Height: 1½–3 feet	
Spread: 6–8 feet	
Bloom Color: Yellow	
Characteristics	
Dense, low-growing, multistemmed deciduous shrub with long recumbent branches	
Trifoliate, glossy blue-green leaves late in spring are bright and colorful in fall	
Polygamodioecious : mostly male or mostly female plants; sex of purchased plants may unknown	
Yellow catkins (male flowers) and yellow panicles (female flowers) in early to mid-spring	
Fuzzy red fruit (drupes) may persist into winter; male flowers needed nearby for fruit to set	
Leaves and twigs are aromatic when bruised	
Spreads by tip-layering and suckering	
Attributes	
Tolerates clay soil, drought (very well), rabbits; no serious pests or diseases; deer rarely damage	
Vigorous growth; does well in disturbed urban soils	
Attracts birds, butterflies, and small mammals	
Growing and Maintenance Tips	Excellent Replacement for
Soil Requirements: Acidic (adaptable), well-drained	Berberis thunbergii - Japanese Barberry
Light Requirements: Sun, Partial Shade	Euonymus alatus - Burning Bush
Water Requirements: Dry, Moist	Spirea japonica - Japanese Spirea
Use in “hell strips” or en masse on rocky, dry, steep slopes (for erosion control) or bare, poor soil areas	<p>*The species is native to DC and to all NoVa counties but Arlington. It is absent in DE.</p>
Hardiness: USDA Zones 3–9	

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Images by Elaine Mills, Arlington/Green Spring Gardens & Mary Free (middle), Fairlington Community Center



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