



Deer Resistant Plants



Unfortunately no plant is impervious to deer browsing, but the more resistant species possess distinctive traits that make them less palatable to the deer. When you are shopping for deer resistant plants, look for sharp, prickly or fuzzy foliage or stems, flowers with strong, perhaps smelly fragrance, and aromatic foliage. The following list of plants is categorized as good resistance (rarely eaten), medium resistance (occasionally eaten), and poor resistance (often eaten/damaged).

Good Resistance:

Annuals

Ageratum
Antirrhinum (Snapdragon)
Canna
Catharanthus (Flowering Vinca)
Cleome
Helichrysum (Strawflower/
Licorice Vine)
Heliotrope
Hypoestes (Polka Dot)
Ipomoea (Morning Glory)
Lantana
Lobularia (Sweet Alyssum)
Nicotiana
Ocimum (Basil)
Ornamental Grasses/Phormium
Petroselinum (Parsley)
Rosmarinus (Rosemary)
Salvia farinacea (Blue Salvia)
Senecio (Dusty Miller)
Tagetes (Marigold)
Verbena

Perennials/ Hardy Bulbs

Acanthus (Bear's Breeches)
Achillea (Yarrow)
Aconitum (Monkshood)
Acorus (Sweetflag)
Aegopodium (Bishop's Weed)
Agastache (Hyssop)
Ajuga
Alchemilla (Lady's Mantle)
Allium (Onions, Chives, etc.)
Anemone
Aquilegia (Columbine)
Artemisia
Aruncus (Goat's Beard)
Asarum (Ginger)
Asclepias (Butterfly Weed)
Astilbe
Athyrium (Painted Fern)
Baptisia (False Indigo)

Perennials continued

Bergenia
Brunnera
Camassia (Quamash)
Centaurea (Bachelor's Button)
Cerastium (Snow in Summer)
Ceratostigma (Plumbago)
Chelone (Turtlehead)
Cimicifuga (Bugbane)
Clematis
Colchicum (Autumn Crocus)
Convallaria (Lily of the Valley)
Coreopsis
Corydalis
Crocosmia
Cyrptomium (Holly Fern)
Dicentra (Bleeding Heart)
Digitalis (Foxglove)
Echinacea
Epimedium
Eranthis (Winter Aconite)
Heuchera (Coral Bells)
Eupatorium (Joe Pye Weed)
Euphorbia
Filipendula (Queen of the Prairie)
Fritillaria (Crown Imperial)
Galanthus (Snowdrop)
Geum
Gypsophila (Baby's Breath)
Helenium (Helen's Flower)
Helleborus (Lenten Rose)
Hyacinth
Iberis (Candytuft)
Lamium/Lamiastrum
Lavandula (Lavender)
Leucanthemum (Shasta Daisy)
Liatris (Gayfeather)
Ligularia
Linum (Flax)
Lupinus
Lychnis (Rose Campion)
Lythrum (Loosestrife)
Matteuccia (Ostrich Fern)

Perennials continued

Mentha (Mint)
Monarda (BeeBalm)
Muscari (Grape Hyacinth)
Myosotis (Forget Me Not)
Narcissus (Daffodil)
Nepeta (Catmint)
Oenothera (Evening
Primrose)
Origanum (Oregano)
Ornamental Grasses
Osmunda (Cinnamon Fern)
Pachysandra
Paeonia (Peony)
Papaver (Poppy)
Perovskia (Russian Sage)
Platycodon (Balloon
Flower)
Polemonium (Jacob's
Ladder)
Pulmonaria (Lungwort)
Pyrethrum (Painted Daisy)
Salvia (Meadow Sage)
Santolina (Lavender-
Cotton)
Scabiosa (Pin-cushion)
Scilla (Squill)
Solidago (Goldenrod)
Stachys (Lamb's Ear)
Tanacetum (Tansy)
Thymus (Thyme)
Tiarella (Foamflower)
Verbascum (Mullein)
Veronica (Speedwell)
Vinca (Myrtle)

Trees & Shrubs

Aronia (Chokeberry)
Berberis (Barberry)
Betula (Birch)
Buddleia (Butterfly Bush)
Buxus (Boxwood)
Callicarpa (Beautyberry)

Trees & Shrubs continued

Calluna (Heather)
Caryopteris (Blue Mist)
Chamaecyparis (Cypress)
Clethra
Cornus (Dogwood)
Crataegus (Hawthorn)
Daphne
Deutzia
Erica (Heath)
Fagus (Beech)
Forsythia
Ginkgo
Gleditsia (Honey Locust)
Ilex glabra (Ink berry)
Itea (Sweetspire)
Juniper
Kalmia (Mt. Laurel)
Kolkwitzia (Beautybush)
Leucothoe
Lonicera (Honeysuckle)
Magnolia (Saucer, Star)
Microbiota (Siberian
Cypress)
Myrica (Bayberry)
Picea (Spruce)
Pieris
Pinus (Pine, not White Pine)
Spiraea
Syringa (Lilac)
Viburnum
Wisteria
Yucca

Medium

Resistance:

Annuals

Alocasia (Elephant's Ear)
Anethum (Dill)
Begonia
Caladium
Celosia
Cosmos

Medium

Resistance:

Annuals continued

Caladium
Cyclamen
Dahlia
Dianthus
Gazania
Gerbera
Gladiolus
Helianthus (Sunflower)
Lobelia
Osteospermum
Pansy
Perilla
Pelargonium (Geranium)
Petunia
Scaevola
Tropaeolum (Nasturtium)
Viola
Zinnia

Perennials

Armeria (Sea Thrift)
Aster
Bellis (English Daisy)
Campanula
Chrysanthemum
Clematis
Delphinium
Dianthus
Erigeron (Fleabane)
Eryngium (Sea Holly)
Gaillardia (Blanket Flower)
Galium (Sweet Woodruff)
Gaura
Geranium (fuzzy or fragrant)
Hedera (Ivy)
Hibiscus
Hypericum (St. John's Wort)
Iris
Kniphofia (Red Hot Poker)
Lilium
Lobelia (Cardinal Flower)
Lychnis (Maltese Cross)
Lysimachia
Penstemon
Phlox (any)
Physostegia (Obedient Plant)
Primula (Primrose)
Saponaria (Soapwort)
Sedum
Sempervivum (Hens & Chicks)
Sidalcea (Checkermallow)
Solidago (Goldenrod)
Stokesia (Stoke's Aster)
Thalictrum (Meadow Rue)
Tiarella (Foam Flower)
Tradescantia (Spiderwort)
Tricyrtis (Toad Lily)
Trollius (Globe Flower)

Trees & Shrubs

Abies (Concolor Fir)
Acer (Maple)
Aesculus (Buckeye)
Amelanchier (Serviceberry)
Campsis (Trumpet Vine)
Cotinus (Smokebush)
Cotoneaster
Hamamelis (Witchhazel)
Hibiscus (Rose of Sharon)
Hydrangea
Hypericum (St. John's Wort)
Ilex (Blue, Winterberry, etc.)
Kerria
Ligustrum (Privet)
Magnolia (most)
Metasequoia (Dawn Redwood)
Philadelphus (Mock Orange)
Potentilla
Prunus (Jap. Flowering)
Pyrus (Flowering Pear)
Quercus (Oak)
Rhododendron
Rosa (Rugosa or Landscape types, not Hybrids)
Salix (Willows)
Tilia (Linden)
Tsuga (Hemlock)
Weigela

Poor Resistance:

Annuals

Impatiens
Tulips

Perennials

Alcea (Hollyhock)
Geranium (most non-scented)
Fragaria (Strawberry)
Hemerocallis (Daylily)
Hosta
Rudbeckia (Black-eyed Susan)

Trees & Shrubs

Abies (most Fir, except Concolor)
Azalea
Cercis (Redbud)
Euonymus
Malus (Apples)
Prunus (Plums, Cherries)
Rosa (Hybrids)
Taxus (Yew)
Thuja (Arborvitae)

Deer Deterrent Tips and Points to Remember:

- Deer are habitual creatures; they will return and teach their offspring to return to the best feeding areas. That is why deer resistant plant selection is so important and your first line of defense.
- In combination with good plant selection, breaking deer of their browsing habit may require physical barriers like fencing or screening, the rotation and repeat application of smell and taste repellents, and/or the use of frightening techniques like a dog, motion detecting sprinklers or electric shock devices.
- Our top deer repellent recommendations for ease of use, long residual and effectiveness are the following: Plantskydd, Deer Stopper, Liquid Fence, and Repels All.
- Plant material may vary in resistance from one landscape to another depending upon the density of deer in the area, time of year, and type of weather.
- Severe browsing damage is worst in freezing cold weather with lasting, accumulative snowfall. In this case no plant is resistant. Heavy deer damage also occurs in early spring as new, tender plant growth is produced, the deer are starving, and females are trying to rear their young.
- In the beginning of September, male bucks cause most of the landscape damage on saplings (trees 3" caliper or less) and young shrubs by rutting. This can be easily prevented with plastic tree guards, burlap or mesh screening material.
- Planting more palatable species in the front yard, closer to the house or street may reduce deer damage.
- Surrounding low resistance plant species with species that have good resistance may deter browsing too.
- As deer population and density increase there will be increased pressure on the deer to find more food sources. Therefore, in the near future some good resistance plants gradually may become medium and/or poor resistance. You may have noticed this in your own garden over the past several years where certain species that were not consumed before are favorites now.

Deer Resistant and Deer Damage Factsheets

The Elusive Deer – Ohio State Extension – Paulding County

<https://u.osu.edu/pauldingmgv/2021/05/07/the-elusive-deer-proof-garden/>

Deer Damage and Control – Division of Wildlife

https://ohiodnr.gov/wps/wcm/connect/gov/64c9e880-93ef-408b-b80f-5836177eac7e/Deer+damage+control+pub138.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18_K9I401S01H7F40QBNJU3SO1F56-64c9e880-93ef-408b-b80f-5836177eac7e-nxBcHBh

Deer Damage and Prevention – Internet Center for Wildlife Damage Management

<https://icwdm.org/species/other-mammals/deer/deer-damage-prevention-and-control-methods/>