



PLANTS TOLERANT OF MOIST TO WET SOIL

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Gardening in Chicagoland's heavy clay soils can be quite challenging. Although clay soils tend to be rich in nutrients, they often lack the air space essential for good drainage. Many plants will not tolerate soils that are constantly moist or wet, however; the plants listed in the table below are naturally adapted to perform well in these inhospitable conditions. **Moist soil** is defined as constantly damp, but rarely exposed to standing water. **Wet soil** is defined as saturated, with occasional exposure (less than 1 day) to standing surface water. **Flood tolerant** plants can withstand a few days of standing water from events such as spring snowmelt and heavy seasonal rains.

SMALL TO MEDIUM TREES - 15 to 25 FEET			
Common Name	Botanic Name	Exposure	Flood Tolerant
Arborvitae, Eastern	<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	○ / ●	
Arborvitae, Western	<i>Thuja plicata</i>	○ / ●	
Dogwood, Corneliancherry	<i>Cornus mas</i>	○ / ●	
Dogwood, Giant Gray	<i>Cornus drummondii</i>	○ / ●	
Fringetree	<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>	○ / ●	
Hornbeam, American	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	○ / ●	
Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier</i>	○ / ●	
LARGE TREES - 25 to 60 FEET			
Aspen, Quacking	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	○	
Bald Cypress	<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	○ / ●	X
Birch, River	<i>Betula nigra</i>	○	X
Black Gum	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	○	
Dawn Redwood	<i>Metasequoia glyptostroboides</i>	○	
Elm	<i>Ulmus</i>	○	
Honeylocust	<i>Gleditsia</i>	○ / ●	
Katsuratree	<i>Cercidiphyllum japonicum</i>	○ / ●	
Maple, Freeman	<i>Acer freemanii</i>	○ / ●	
Maple, Red	<i>Acer rubrum</i>	○ / ●	
Oak, Bur	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	○	
Oak, Swamp White	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	○	X
Sweetgum	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	○	
Tulip Tree	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	○	
Willow	<i>Salix</i>	○	X

Sun ○ 6 hours direct sun	Part Sun ● 4 hours direct sun	Shade ● Less than 3 hours direct sun
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SHRUBS			
Common Name	Botanic Name	Exposure	Flood Tolerant
Bayberry, Northern	<i>Myrica pensylvanica</i>	○ / ●	
Buckeye, Bottlebrush	<i>Aesculus parviflora</i>	○ / ●	
Buckeye, Red	<i>Aesculus pavia</i>	○ / ●	
Carolina Allspice	<i>Calycanthus floridus</i>	○ / ●	X
Chokeberry	<i>Aronia</i>	○ / ●	X
Clethra, Summersweet	<i>Clethra alnifolia</i>	○ / ●	
Dogwood, Gray	<i>Cornus racemosa</i>	○ / ●	X
Dogwood, Redtwig	<i>Cornus alba/sericea</i>	○ / ●	X
Elderberry	<i>Sambucus</i>	○	
Forsythia	<i>Forsythia</i>	○ / ●	
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera tatarica</i>	○ / ●	
Ninebark	<i>Physocarpus opulifolius</i>	○	
Potentilla	<i>Potentilla</i>	○ / ●	
Privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	○ / ●	
Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>	○ / ●	X
Stephanandra, Cutleaf	<i>Stephanandra incisa</i> 'Crispa'	○ / ●	
Viburnum, American Cranberrybush	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>	○ / ●	
Viburnum, American Cranberrybush Compact	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i> 'Compactum'	○ / ●	
Viburnum, Arrowwood	<i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	○ / ●	
Viburnum, Blackhaw	<i>Viburnum prunifolium</i>	○ / ●	
Viburnum, European Cranberrybush	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	○ / ●	
Viburnum, Mohican	<i>Viburnum lantana</i> 'Mohican'	○ / ●	
Viburnum, Sargent	<i>Viburnum sargentii</i>	○ / ●	
Virginia Sweetspire	<i>Itea virginica</i>	○ / ●	
Willow	<i>Salix</i>	○ / ●	X
Winterberry	<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	○ / ●	X
Witchhazel, Fall	<i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>	○ / ●	
Witchhazel, Spring	<i>Hamamelis vernalis</i>	○ / ●	
VINES			
Akebia, Fiveleaf	<i>Akebia quinata</i>	○ / ●	
Climbing Hydrangea	<i>Hydrangea anomala s. petiolaris</i>	○ / ●	
Honeysuckle, Dropmore Scarlet	<i>Lonicera x brownii</i> 'Dropmore Scarlet'	○ / ●	
Honeysuckle, Goldflame	<i>Lonicera x heckrottii</i>	○ / ●	
Japanese Hydrangea-vine	<i>Schizophragma hydrangeoides</i>	○ / ●	
Trumpet	<i>Campsis</i>	○ / ●	
PERENNIALS			
Amsonia, Willow	<i>Amsonia tabernaemontana</i>	○ / ●	
Astilbe	<i>Astilbe</i>	○ / ●	
Bleeding Heart	<i>Dicentra</i>	● / ●	
Cardinal Flower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	○ / ●	X

PERENNIALS (cont)			
Common Name	Botanic Name	Exposure	Flood Tolerant
Celadine Poppy	<i>Stylophorum diphyllum</i>	☐ / ●	
Chinese Globeflower	<i>Trollius chinensis</i>	○ / ●	
Cimicifuga, Bugbane	<i>Actaea</i>	● / ●	
Daylily	<i>Heemerocallis</i> varieties	○ / ●	
Forget-Me-Not	<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>	○ / ●	
Goatsbeard	<i>Aruncus dioicus</i>	○ / ●	
Hardy Hibiscus	<i>Hibiscus</i>	○ / ●	X
Hosta	<i>Hosta</i>	● / ●	
Houttuynia	<i>Houttuynia cordata</i>	○ / ●	X
Iris, Blue Flag	<i>Iris versicolor</i>	○ / ●	
Iris, Japanese	<i>Iris ensata</i>	○ / ●	X
Iris, Siberian	<i>Iris sibirica</i>	○ / ●	
Iris, Variegated Sweet Flag	<i>Iris pallida</i> 'Variegata'	○ / ●	X
Iris, Yellow Flag	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	○ / ●	X
Joe Pye Weed	<i>Eupatorium</i>	○ / ●	
Lady's Mantle	<i>Alchemilla mollis</i>	○ / ●	
Leopard's Bane	<i>Doronicum</i>	○ / ●	
Ligularia	<i>Ligularia</i>	●	X
Lobelia, Great Blue	<i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>	○ / ●	X
Loosestrife	<i>Lysimachia</i>	○ / ●	
Marsh Marigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>	● / ●	X
Masterwort	<i>Astrantia major</i>	● / ●	
Meadow Rue	<i>Thalictrum aquilegifolium</i>	○ / ●	
Monkshood	<i>Aconitum</i>	○ / ●	
Obedient Plant	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	○ / ●	
Queen of the Prairie	<i>Filipendula</i>	○ / ●	
Rodgersia	<i>Rodgersia</i>	● / ●	
Snakeroot, Bugbane	<i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>	● / ●	
Solomon's Seal	<i>Polygonatum</i>	● / ●	
Spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia virginiana</i>	○ / ●	
Turtlehead	<i>Chelone</i>	● / ●	
Umbrella Plant	<i>Darmera peltatum</i>	○ / ●	X
Violet	<i>Viola</i>	○ / ●	
Virginia Bluebells	<i>Mertensia virginica</i>	○ / ●	
Wild Ginger	<i>Asarum canadensis</i>	● / ●	

FERNS			
Common Name	Botanic Name	Exposure	Flood Tolerant
Cinnamon	<i>Osmunda cinnamonea</i>	○ / ●	X
Hay Scented	<i>Dennstaedtia punctilobula</i>	◐ / ●	
Interrupted	<i>Osmunda claytonia</i>	○ / ●	X
Lady	<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>	◐ / ●	
Maidenhair	<i>Adiantum pedatum</i>	◐ / ●	X
Ostrich	<i>Matteuccia pensylvanica</i>	◐ / ●	X
Royal	<i>Osmunda regalis</i>	○ / ●	X
Sensitive	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	○ / ●	X
Toothed Wood	<i>Dryopteris carthusiana</i>	◐ / ●	X
GRASSES			
Cord Grass	<i>Spartina pectinata</i>	○ / ◐	
Japanese Blood Grass, Red Baron	<i>Imperata cylindrica</i> 'Red Baron'	○ / ◐	
Maiden Grass	<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	○ / ◐	
Pampas Grass	<i>Cortaderia</i> (annual)	○ / ◐	
Ravenna, Hardy Pampas Grass	<i>Erianthus ravennae</i>	○ / ◐	
Sedge	<i>Carex</i>	◐ / ●	
Snowy Woodrush	<i>Luzula nivea</i>	◐	
Sweet Flag	<i>Acorus</i>	○ / ◐	X
Switch Grass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	○ / ◐	
GROUNDCOVER			
Ajuga, Bugleweed	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	○ / ●	
Ivy, Thorndale English	<i>Hedera helix</i> 'Thorndale'	◐ / ●	
Japanese Spurge, Pachysandra	<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>	◐ / ●	
Lilyturf	<i>Liriope spicata</i>	○ / ◐	
Wintercreeper, Purpleleaf	<i>Euonymus coloratus</i>	○ / ●	