



# 10 Deer Resistant Plants To Know About

1. Doublefile Viburnum (*Viburnum plicatum* var. *tomentosum*) comes in three excellent cultivars:  
'Maresii' – Will mature to 10' x 12' wide and rounded shape. Heavy set spring flowers.  
'Shasta' – Will mature to 6' x 10' wide and a horizontal, oval shape. Heavy set spring flowers.  
'Summer Snowflake' – Will matures at 6' x 5' and a rounded, upright shape. Reblooms throughout summer.  
These plants are grown best in a part sun / part shade location, but I have observed them growing fine in full sun and heavy shade. They prefer moist, well drained soil, but they will grow in wide range of conditions. The 'summer snowflake' variety, aside from being smaller than the other two, will lightly rebloom all summer.
2. Magic Carpet Spiraea (*Spiraea japonica* 'Magic Carpet') is a rounded, compact small shrub that is often seen in the landscape at 2' x 2', but can get to 3' x 4'. It requires full sun, or at the very least a half day of direct sunlight. The shrub is tough to kill and will tolerate most soil types except wet conditions. I love this plant because it keeps offering something new throughout the season. First, in the early spring it pushes out attractive yellow foliage. Then, shortly after, it pushes out new growth that is an orange/red - that looks striking set over the yellow leaves. THEN, in the late spring, it is covered with tiny pink flowers. AND THEN, throughout the summer, the foliage cools down to a light green color and it occasionally has produces new flowers. Also, it takes pruning in the late winter very well, so you can keep it smaller if you would like. ('Goldmound' is another popular cultivar that stays bright yellow all season, however it does not have the orange/red new growth.)
3. 'Mountain Fire' Andromeda (*Pieris japonica* 'Mountain Fire') is an evergreen shrub that will grow to 8' tall and 4' wide, but very slowly. They do not do well in full sun, where unfortunately many people plant them. They will do well in a part day of morning sun, light shade or heavy shade. They are best in a well drained soil that is moderately moist. Aside from their early spring flowers that look like miniature strings of pearls, the new growth on this plant is an very attractive bright crimson color. Many people, including myself, find this new growth more even attractive than the flowers. ('Dorothy Wyckoff' is another popular cultivar, but it does not have the reddish new growth.)
4. Henry's Garnet Itea (*Itea virginica* 'Henry's Garnet') is a mounding shrub that will grow to 5' tall by 6' wide. It will flower the best and have the best fall color if planted in full sun to part sun where the soil conditions are moist. However, this plant will live in shade, as well as, dry soil to constantly wet soil. It is native to New Jersey and grows along stream banks where it forms large colonies. The cultivar used in the landscape trade ('Henry's Garnet') is a plant I love for several reasons: (1) In the spring it will be covered in long, white, bottlebrush flowers. (2) Then in the fall it will have brilliant red foliage. (3) Because it is a native, woodland shrub, it works in very well to landscapes that are surrounded by woods. (There is a smaller cultivar called 'Little Henry'.)
5. Microbiota (*Microbiota decussata*) is a shrub that is quite similar is all respects to a groundcover juniper. It will grow, very slowly, to 12"-18" tall and 6'-8' wide in 10 years. It is evergreen, however, in the winter it turns to a bronze/purple color. What makes it special is that, unlike junipers, microbiota will grow in light shade – either a half day of shade or filter light. It is very important for there to be good drainage. Microbiota grows well in sandy soil or hummus rich soil.

This document written by Rich Cording, Jr. of CLC Landscape Design, Inc. in March 2009. For further reference visit our website on deer resistant landscaping: [www.clcdesign.com/deer-resistant-landscaping.htm](http://www.clcdesign.com/deer-resistant-landscaping.htm) or email me at [rich@clcdesign.com](mailto:rich@clcdesign.com).

6. 'Purple Haze' Agastache (*Agastache x 'Purple Haze'*) is a perennial that blooms from early summer into the fall! It will grow to 3' tall and 2' wide, and it will reach that size in the first year you plant it. The flowers are purple with a hint of blue. Plant in full sun and well drained soil. Also, good air circulation helps keep the leaves clean. Butterflies love this plant. ('Blue Fortune' is another popular cultivar with supposedly bluer flowers.)

7. 'Walker's Low' Catmint (*Nepeta x faassenii 'Walker's Low'*) is a perennial that grows to 18" by 18". Catmint is one of the easiest plants to grow – just give it full sun and well drained soil and it will look great all summer. The foliage is blue/gray and the flowers are a light purple color. If you are fond of lavender, this plant is much easier to grow and yields very similar colored foliage and flowers. I love to plant catmint near patios, rocks or stone steps because it loves the reflected heat and will grow out over them.

8. Ornamental Grasses. There are many great ornamental grasses, but here are my three favorite:  
(A) 'Karl Foerster' Grass (*Calamagrostis x acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'*) – Fullest with full sun and moist, well drained conditions, but grows in part sun and even light shade, and will grow in drier conditions. Flowers early summer through the fall with tall, golden plumes. Grows 3'-4' tall, 1'-2' wide with a very upright habit.  
(B) 'Karley Rose' Grass (*Pennisetum orientale 'Karley Rose'*) - Fullest with full sun and moist, well drained conditions, but grows in part sun as well. Also, flowers early summer through the fall with fuzzy, bottlebrush flowers that have a hint of rose color. Grows 3' tall, 2'-3' wide.  
(C) 'Morning Light' Grass (*Miscanthus sinensis 'Morning Light'*) - Fullest with full sun and moist, well drained conditions, but grows in part sun and will grow in drier conditions once established. Planted for its white and green foliage, that looks mostly white from a distance. This grass is great because the whiteness of the foliage makes any nearby flowers look brighter, and more colorful. It will grow 5' tall, 4' wide and has rose colored flowers in the fall.

9. Yellow Hakone Grass (*Hakonechloa macra 'Aureola'*) is groundcover grass, not a tall grass. This plant is great because it adds color to a shade garden. The leaves are yellow and they hold their color in the shade. It will form a mounding clump 12"-18" tall and wide. Plant in mass for best effect or repeat single plants throughout the garden. Grows in full shade, light shade, and part sun. Best with a moist, well drained soil, but it is not very picky. Just keep it from extreme dryness and wetness. In the winter, it turns an attractive tan color. Cut back to ground each March.

10. Ferns. There are a variety of ferns to use in a landscape, but these are my three favorite:  
(A) Lady Fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*) is probably the fern you envision when you think of a fern. It has green lacy leaves and forms a clump. Best planted in a mass or in nooks and crannies of your garden. They grow best in light shade or full shade in a consistently moist soil, but not standing water.  
(B) Autumn Fern (*Dryopteris erythrosora*) is a fun fern because while most of its leaves are green, some of them are a copper-bronze color. Grows best in light shade or full shade in a moist soil.  
(C) Hay-scented Fern (*Dennstaedtia punctilobula*) is notable because it will spread aggressively. Plant it where it will have room to grow, like on a wood's edge. If you are looking to add interest to an empty woodland floor, this is a great plant to use.