

# RIPARIAN CORRIDOR PLANTS

## What is a “Riparian Corridor?”

“Riparian” refers to the area by the banks of a river, stream, or other body of water. “Corridor” refers to a designated zone or strip of land of a specified width along the border of an area. So a “riparian corridor” is the natural vegetation and soil cover adjacent to a river, stream, or other body of water.

Riparian corridors provide multiple functions and values. They are the first line of defense against the impacts of impervious surfaces. Corridors slow runoff, protect shorelines from erosion, aid in flood control, and filter or trap pollutants. They also provide habitat for wildlife, as well as shade waters for fisheries enhancement. Additionally, riparian corridors may provide scenic value and privacy.

The following is a list of some of the plants native to Connecticut that can live in these riparian corridors – areas which may be wet at certain periods of the year, or which may be inundated at certain times or after heavy rain events. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather a sampling of some of the more common native plants that can grow under these conditions. There are numerous other plants that will do well in upland buffer areas to wetlands and watercourses in places that rarely if ever, are inundated. These plants are not addressed here. Instead this list focuses on plants that can withstand periodic inundation or consistently wet to moist soils.

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| <b>TREES</b>                   |                          |   |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Latin name</b>              | <b>Common name</b>       | <b>Notes</b>  |
| <i>Acer rubrum</i>             | Red maple                | Wet to dry soils; sun to part shade; tolerates intermittent flooding and wet soils                                |
| <i>Acer saccharinum</i>        | Silver maple             | Rich, wet to moist soils; sun to shade; tolerates seasonal flooding   |
| <i>Betula lenta</i>            | Sweet birch              | Rich, moist well-drained soils; sun to shade  |
| <i>Betula nigra</i>            | River birch              | Moist soils; good for periodically wet areas; sun to part shade   |
| <i>Fraxinus americana</i>      | White ash                | Deep, moist soils; sun to shade; tolerant of poorly drained soils   |
| <i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>  | Green ash                | Wet to dry soils; sun to part shade; tolerates seasonal flooding  |
| <i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> | Sweetgum                 | Deep, moist soils: sun to part shade (Natural populations are listed as of Special Concern in Connecticut)        |
| <i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i> | Tulip tree, tulip poplar | Rich, moist soils; sun to part shade  |
| <i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>         | Black gum                | Wide range of soils, best on moist well-drained deep soils; sun to part shade; will tolerate poorly drained soils |
| <i>Platanus occidentalis</i>   | American Sycamore        | Best on moist, well-drained soils; sun to part shade; tolerates seasonal flooding                                 |
| <i>Populus deltoides</i>       | Eastern cottonwood       | Moist, well-drained soils; sun to part shade; can tolerate seasonally flooded soils                               |
| <i>Quercus bicolor</i>         | Swamp white oak          | Poorly drained to dry soils; sun to part shade; can tolerate occasional flooding                                  |
| <i>Quercus palustris</i>       | Pin oak                  | Wet to moist soils: sun to part shade; tolerates poorly drained soils   |
| <i>Salix nigra</i>             | Black willow             | Wet to moist soils; sun to shade  |

| <b>SMALL TREES and SHRUBS</b>    |                               |  |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Latin name</b>                | <b>Common name</b>            | <b>Notes</b>   |
| <i>Alnus serrulata</i>           | Hazel alder                   | Wet to moist soils; sun, part shade, shade                             |
| <i>Amelanchier arborea</i>       | Common serviceberry, Shadbush | Moist, well-drained soils; sun to part shade                           |
| <i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>    | Canadian serviceberry         | Wet to moist, well drained soils; prefers wet sites; sun to part shade |
| <i>Amelanchier laevis</i>        | Allegheny serviceberry        | Moist to dry soils; sun to part shade                                  |
| <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i> | Common buttonbush             | Wet to moist soils; part shade to shade                                |
| <i>Clethra alnifolia</i>         | Coastal sweet pepperbush      | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade                                  |
| <i>Cornus alternifolia</i>       | Alternatleaf dogwood          | Moist well drained soils; part shade to shade                          |
| <i>Cornus amomum</i>             | Silky dogwood                 | Wet to moist soils; sun to shade                                       |
| <i>Cornus florida</i>            | Flowering dogwood             | Moist to dry, well-drained soils; sun to part shade                    |
| <i>Cornus racemosa</i>           | Gray dogwood                  | Tolerant of dry to wet soils; sun to shade                             |
| <i>Cornus sericea</i>            | Redosier dogwood              | Moist, well-drained soils; sun to partial shade                        |

### SMALL TREES and SHRUBS (continued)

| Latin name                                       | Common name               | Notes   |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Eubotrys racemosa</i> (was <i>Leucothoe</i> ) | Swamp doghobble           | Wet to moist soils; part shade  |
| <i>Hamamelis virginiana</i>                      | American witch hazel      | Moist to dry soils, best on moister soils; sun to shade   |
| <i>Ilex verticillata</i>                         | Common winterberry        | Moist soils; sun to part shade; will tolerate poorly-drained soils; need male and female plants to produce fruits; Fruits are poisonous |
| <i>Lindera benzoin</i>                           | Northern spicebush        | Prefers moist, well-drained soils but grows in wet to dry soils; sun to part shade  |
| <i>Photinia melanocarpa</i>                      | Black chokeberry          | Moist soils; sun to part shade; flood tolerant  |
| <i>Photinia pyrifolia</i>                        | Red chokeberry            | Moist, rich soils; sun  |
| <i>Rhododendron maximum</i>                      | Great laurel              | Wet to moist, well drained soils; Partial shade to shade<br>Poisonous plants  |
| <i>Rhododendron viscosum</i>                     | Swamp azalea              | Wet soil; part shade; flood tolerant. All parts of plants are highly toxic.   |
| <i>Salix discolor</i>                            | Pussy willow              | Moist soils; sun  |
| <i>Salix sericea</i>                             | Silky willow              | Wet to moist soils; sun to shade  |
| <i>Sambucus nigra</i> ssp. <i>canadensis</i>     | American black elderberry | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade. Parts of plant are toxic.  |
| <i>Spiraea alba</i>                              | White meadowsweet         | Wet to moist soils; sun to shade  |
| <i>Vaccinium corymbosum</i>                      | Highbush blueberry        | Wet to dry soils; sun to part shade   |
| <i>Viburnum dentatum</i>                         | Southern arrowwood        | Wet to dry soils; sun to part shade   |
| <i>Viburnum opulus</i> var. <i>americana</i>     | American cranberry bush   | Wet to well drained, moist soils; flood tolerant; sun to partial shade  |

### FERNS and FERN ALLIES

| Latin name                   | Common name            | Notes   |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| <i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>  | Water horsetail        | Wet to moist soils; sun to shade                                    |
| <i>Equisetum hyemale</i>     | Scouringrush horsetail | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade                               |
| <i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>    | Sensitive fern         | Wet to moist soils; part shade to shade                             |
| <i>Osmunda cinnamomea</i>    | Cinnamon fern          | Wet to moist soils; sun to shade – depending on moisture conditions |
| <i>Osmunda claytoniana</i>   | Interrupted fern       | Moist to dry soils; Shade   |
| <i>Osmunda regalis</i>       | Royal fern             | Wet to moist soils; part shade to shade                             |
| <i>Thelypteris palustris</i> | Eastern marsh fern     | Wet soils; sun  |
| <i>Woodwardia virginica</i>  | Virginia chain fern    | Wet to moist soils; part shade (can be aggressive)                  |

## GRASSES, SEDGES, REEDS

| Latin Name                               | Common Name            | Notes   |
|--|------------------------|---|
| <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>          | Bluejoint              | Moist to wet soils; sun to shade; tolerates seasonal flooding             |
| <i>Carex crinita</i> var. <i>crinita</i> | Long hair sedge        | Wet, sun  |
| <i>Carex lupulina</i>                    | Hop sedge              | Moist to wet soils; part shade  |
| <i>Carex lurida</i>                      | Sallow sedge           | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade; will tolerate temporary flooding   |
| <i>Carex scoparia</i>                    | Broom sedge            | Wet to dry soils; sun to part shade                                       |
| <i>Carex stipata</i>                     | Awlfruit sedge         | Wet to moist soils including standing water; sun                          |
| <i>Carex stricta</i>                     | Tussock sedge          | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade; will tolerate standing water       |
| <i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>                 | Fox sedge              | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade                                     |
| <i>Dulichium arundinaceum</i>            | Threeway sedge         | Wet; sun to part shade  |
| <i>Eleocharis palustris</i>              | Common spikerush       | Wet to moist soils; part shade; areas with permanent or seasonal flooding |
| <i>Elymus riparius</i>                   | Riverbank wildrye      | Moist soils; part shade to shade  |
| <i>Elymus virginicus</i>                 | Virginia wildrye       | Moist soils; sun to part shade  |
| <i>Glyceria canadensis</i>               | Rattlesnake mannagrass | Wet to moist soils; sun   |
| <i>Juncus canadensis</i>                 | Canadian rush          | Wet to moist; sun to part shade   |
| <i>Juncus effuses</i>                    | Common rush            | Wet to moist soils; sun   |
| <i>Leersia oryzoides</i>                 | Rice cutgrass          | Wet soil to standing water; sun   |

## HERBACEOUS PLANTS

| Latin name  | Common name           | Notes   |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| <i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>  | Jack in the pulpit    | Wet to moist soils; sun to shade                                    |
| <i>Asclepias incarnata</i>  | Swamp milkweed        | Wet to moist soils; sun   |
| <i>Caltha palustris</i>   | Yellow marsh marigold | Wet to moist soils; part shade                                      |
| <i>Chelone glabra</i>   | White turtlehead      | Wet to moist soils; sun to shade                                    |
| <i>Doellingeria umbellata</i> ( <i>Aster umbellatus</i> )                               | Parasol whitetop      | Moist soils; sun to part shade                                      |
| <i>Eupatoriadelphus fistulosus</i> ( <i>Eupatorium fistulosum</i> )                     | Trumpetweed           | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade                               |
| <i>Eupatoriadelphus maculatus</i> var. <i>maculatus</i> ( <i>Eupatorium maculatum</i> ) | Spotted trumpetweed   | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade                               |
| <i>Eupatorium perfoliatum</i>   | Common boneset        | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade                               |
| <i>Helenium autumnale</i>   | Common Sneezeweed     | Moist soils; sun; poisonous plant parts                             |
| <i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i>  | Eastern rosemallow    |   |
| <i>Iris prismatica</i>  | Slender blueflag      | Moist soils; part shade; brackish to fresh coastal wetlands         |
| <i>Iris versicolor</i>  | Larger blueflag       | Wet to moist soils; sun to part shade                               |
| <i>Lilium superbum</i>  | Turk's cap lily       | Moist but well-drained soil; sun                                    |
| <i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>   | Cardinal flower       | Wet to moist soils; sun, part shade, shade; Lobelias contain toxins |

**HERBACEOUS PLANTS (continued)**

| <b>Latin name</b>   | <b>Common name</b>      | <b>Notes</b>  |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| <i>Lobelia siphilitica</i>  | Great blue lobelia      | Wet to moist soils; sun, part shade, shade; Lobelias contain toxins |
| <i>Mimulus ringens</i>  | Monkey flower           | Wet to moist soils; sun   |
| <i>Peltandra virginica</i>  | Arrow arum              | Wet soils; sun to part shade  |
| <i>Pontederia cordata</i>   | Pickerel weed           | Wet soils; sun to part shade  |
| <i>Rudbeckia laciniata</i>  | Green headed coneflower | Moist soils; sun to part shade                                      |
| <i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>                                       | Broadleaf arrowhead     | Wet soils; sun to part shade  |
| <i>Symphotrichum novae-angliae</i> ( <i>Aster novae-angliae</i> ) | New England aster       | Moist soils; part shade   |
| <i>Symphotrichum novi-belgii</i> ( <i>Aster novi-belgii</i> )     | New York aster          | Moist well-drained soils; sun to part shade                         |
| <i>Verbena hastata</i>  | Blue vervain            | Moist to dry soils; sun to part shade                               |
| <i>Vernonia noveboracensis</i>                                    | New York ironweed       | Moist to dry soils; sun   |
| <i>Viola cucullata</i>  | Marsh blue violet       | Wet to moist soils; sun, part shade, shade                          |
| <i>Viola lanceolata</i>   | Lance-leaved violet     | Wet to moist soils; part shade to shade                             |