

## Favorite plants for schoolyards

The following native species have been chosen for their many interesting uses for children and wildlife, and for their resiliency in the landscape. All species are hardy in Maine, and those marked with asterisks(\*) are native to southern or western New England. For shady sites, many woodland species are adaptable to schoolyards if time is taken to first amend the soil with composted leaves to create the natural conditions of these shade-loving plants. Loosening heavily compacted soil common on school grounds and care during the first year will insure successful plantings. Fall and early spring are the best time for planting.

For more information on planting in tough environments read:

[wildseedproject.net/2017/01/native-groundcovers-beauty-biodiversity-ground-level/](http://wildseedproject.net/2017/01/native-groundcovers-beauty-biodiversity-ground-level/)  
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## Shrubs and small trees

### Alternate-leaved dogwood

*Swida alternifolia*

Growing conditions: Part shade, moist soil  
Height: 12-15 ft. single or multi-stemmed tree  
Bloom time: mid to late spring, fruits in August

### Bayberry

*Morella Caroliniensis*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, dry sandy or gravelly soil, spreads by underground roots  
Height: 3-6'  
Bloom time: early spring, fruits in October

### Beach plum

*Prunus maritima*

Growing conditions: Sun, dry sandy or gravelly soil  
Height: 8 ft. bush or small tree  
Bloom time: early spring, fruits in September

### Blueberry, lowbush

*Vaccinium angustifolium*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist acidic soil  
Height: 1-2 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring, fruits in summer

### Blueberry, highbush

*Vaccinium corymbosum*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist acidic soil  
Height: 6-8 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring, fruits in summer

### Bush honeysuckle

*Diervilla lonicera*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 1-4 ft., spreads by root to make a colony  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

### Chokeberry

*Aronia melanocarpa*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 1-8 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring, fruits in October

### Eastern red cedar

*Juniperus virginiana*

Growing conditions: Full sun, dry soil  
Height: 20 ft.  
Bloom time: spring

### Elderberry-black

*Sambucus niger, sp. canadensis*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 8-10 ft.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer, fruits in August/September

### Gray birch

*Betula populifolia*

Growing conditions: Sun, dry soil  
Height: 20 ft.  
Bloom time: early spring

### Hazelnut

*Corylus Americana, C. cornata*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 6 ft. bush  
Bloom time: early spring, fruits in September

### Inkberry

*Ilex glabra*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist soil  
Height: 4-6 ft.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

### Meadowsweet

*Spiraea alba, S. tomentosa*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 3 ft.  
Bloom time: summer

### Musclewood

*Carpinus caroliniana*

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 20 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

### New Jersey tea

*Ceanothus americanus*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, dry soil  
Height: 3 ft.  
Bloom time: mid summer

### Northern spicebush

*Lindera benzoin*

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist soil  
Height: 12 ft., multi-stemmed tree  
Bloom time: early spring, fruits in August

### Northern white cedar

*Thuja occidentalis*

Growing conditions: Full sun to part shade, moist soil  
Height: 30 ft.  
Bloom time: early spring

### Pussy willow

*Salix discolor*

Growing conditions: Sun, moist to wet soil  
Height: 6-15 ft.  
Bloom time: early spring

### Red-osier dogwood

*Swida sericea*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 2-8 ft, spreads from roots to form large colonies.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

### Redbud

*Cercis canadensis\**

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, dry to moist soil  
Height: 12 ft. tree  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

### Shadbush

*Amelanchier canadensis, A. laevis*

Growing conditions: Sun, part shade moist to dry soil  
Height: 12-20 ft.  
Bloom time: early spring, fruits in July

### Summersweet

*Clethra alnifolia*

Growing conditions: Full sun to part shade, moist soil  
Height: 6 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late summer

### Viburnums

*V. nudum ssp cassinoides, V. dentatum, V. trilobum, V. lentago*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 5-10 ft.  
Bloom time: mid summer, fruits in August/September

### Winterberry holly

*Ilex verticillata*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 5-10 ft.  
Bloom time: mid summer, fruits in October

### Witch hazel

*Hamamelis virginiana*

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 8-15 ft. multi-stemmed small tree  
Bloom time: fall, fruits in October

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## Perennials

### **Aster, New England**

*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 2-5 ft.  
Bloom time: fall

### **Aster, Smooth blue**

*Symphotrichum laevis*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, dry soil  
Height: 2-4 ft.  
Bloom time: fall

### **Black-eyed coneflower**

*Rudbeckia hirta*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, dry soil  
Height: 2 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late summer

### **Blue lobelia**

*Lobelia siphilitica*

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist soil  
Height: 18 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late summer

### **Blue iris**

*Iris versicolor*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 2-3 ft.  
Bloom time: early summer, pods in September

### **Bluets**

*Houstonia caerulea*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist to dry, well-drained soil  
Height: 2 in.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

### **Blue-eyed grass**

*Sisyrinchium spp.*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to dry, well drained soil  
Height: 10 in.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

### **Bloodroot**

*Sanguinaria canadensis*

Growing conditions: Shade, moist soil  
Height: 9 in.  
Bloom time: early spring

### **Boneset**

*Eupatorium perfoliatum*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 3-4 ft.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

### **Butterfly milkweed**

*Asclepias tuberosa*

Growing conditions: Sun, dry well drained soil  
Height: 18"  
Bloom time: mid to late summer, pods in October

### **Ferns: Cinnamon, Christmas, or New York**

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist soil  
Height: 1-3 ft.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

### **Foam flower**

*Tiarella cordifolia*

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist soil  
Height: 8 in., spreads to make small patches  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

### **Foxglove beardtongue**

*Penstemon digitalis*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to dry, well drained soil  
Height: 2 ft.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

### **Golden Alexanders**

*Zizia aptera*, *Z. aurea*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist to dry soils  
Height: 2 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

### **Golden groundsel**

*Packera aurea*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 1 ft.  
Bloom time: early spring

### **Goldenrod, woodland**

*Solidago flexicaulis*, *S. caesia*

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 2 ft.  
Bloom time: fall

### **Grass, Little bluestem**

*Schizachyrium scoparium*

Growing conditions: Sun, dry soil  
Height: 2 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late summer

### **Grass, Purple lovegrass**

*Eragrostis spectabilis*

Growing conditions: Sun, dry soil  
Height: 8 in.  
Bloom time: mid to late summer

### **Grass, Switchgrass**

*Panicum virgatum*

Growing conditions: Sun, moist to dry soil  
Height: 3-4 ft.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

### **Grass, Wild oats**

*Chasmanthium latifolium\**

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist soil  
Height: 3 ft.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

### **Jacob's ladder**

*Polemonium reptans\**

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist soil  
Height: 1 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

### **Joe-pye weed**

*Eutrochium dubium* (4-5 ft.), *E. maculatum* (4-5 ft.), *E. fistulosum* (7-8 ft.)

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 5-10 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late summer

### **Northeastern beardtongue**

*Penstemon hirsutus*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to dry, well-drained soil  
Height: 14 in.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

### **Plaintain-leaved pussytoes**

*Antennaria plantaginifolia*

Growing conditions: Sun, part shade, dry soil  
Height: 10 in., spreads to make a small patch  
Bloom time: early spring

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### Perennials *continued*

#### Red columbine

*Aquilegia canadensis*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist to dry, well-drained soil  
Height: 1-3 ft., plant goes dormant in mid summer  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

#### Shooting star

*Dodecatheon meadia\**

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist soil  
Height: 1 ft., plant goes dormant in early summer  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

#### Solomon's seal

*Polygonatum biflorum*

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist soil  
Height: 3 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

#### Spotted cranesbill

*Geranium maculatum*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist soil  
Height: 18 in.  
Bloom time: mid to late spring

#### Swamp milkweed

*Asclepias incarnata*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 4 ft.  
Bloom time: early to mid summer, pods in October

#### Wood aster, blue

*Symphotrichum cordifolium*

Growing conditions: Sun to shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 2-3 ft.  
Bloom time: fall

#### Wood aster, white

*Eurybia divaricata*

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 14 in., expands to slowly form a small patch  
Bloom time: mid to late summer

#### White turtlehead

*Chelone glabra*

Growing conditions: Part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 3 ft., spreads by roots to form small colony  
Bloom time: fall

#### Wild strawberry

*Fragaria virginiana*

Growing conditions: Moist to dry, sandy or gravelly soil  
Height: 4 in., spreads by roots to form colony  
Bloom time: mid to late spring, fruits in July

#### Violets

*Viola pedata*

Growing conditions: Sun, part shade, moist to dry soil  
Height: 3 in.  
Bloom time: early spring

#### Virginia bluebells

*Mertensia virginica\**

Growing conditions: Part to full shade, moist soil  
Height: 1.5 ft., plant goes dormant in early summer  
Bloom time: early spring

### Vines

#### Clematis

*Clematis virginiana*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 12 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late summer; silky seedheads in October-November

#### Groundnut

*Apios americana*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist to wet soil  
Height: 6-8 ft., spreads vigorously from root system, plant in area where roots are contained  
Bloom time: early to mid summer

#### Trumpet honeysuckle

*Lonicera sempervirens*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist soil  
Height:  
Bloom time: spring to late summer, fruits in September and October

#### Wild cucumber

*Echinocystis lobata*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist soil  
Height: 15-20 ft.  
Bloom time: mid to late summer, fruits in October

### Large canopy trees

#### Basswood

*Tilia americana*

Growing conditions: Sun, moist cool soil  
Bloom time: early summer

#### Birch, paper and yellow

*Betula papyfera, B. alleghaniensis*

Growing conditions: Sun, moist cool soil  
Bloom time: early spring

#### Hickory

*Carya ovata*

Growing conditions: Sun, moist to dry well drained soil  
Bloom time: early spring, nuts in September

#### Maple, red, silver and sugar

*Acer rubrum, A. saccharinum, A. saccharum*

Growing conditions: Sun to part shade, moist soil  
Bloom time: early spring

#### Oak, chestnut, red and white

*Quercus spp.*

Growing conditions: Sun, moist to dry well drained soil  
Bloom time: early spring, nuts in September

#### Tulip tree

*Liriodendron tulipifera*

Growing conditions: Sun, moist to dry well drained soil  
Bloom time: late spring

#### Northern Catalpa

*Catalpa speciosa*

Growing conditions: Sun, moist to dry well drained soil  
Bloom time: summer, pods in October

#### Black gum

*Nyssa sylvatica*

Growing conditions: Sun, moist to dry well drained soil  
Bloom time: late spring, fruits in September

For more native canopy tree ideas and planting information, check out our blog post:

[wildseedproject.net/2018/01/creating-canopy-plant-native-tree-help-bring-forth-greener-future/](http://wildseedproject.net/2018/01/creating-canopy-plant-native-tree-help-bring-forth-greener-future/)