

# Priority Tree & Tall Shrub Species for Planting, Replacement & Reforestation in Northern NJ

(Morris, Passaic, Bergen, Sussex,  
Warren, Essex, Hudson)

## UPLANDS or ROCKY SLOPES

White oak - *Quercus alba*  
Chestnut oak - *Quercus montana*  
Pignut hickory - *Carya glabra* St  
Mockernut hickory - *Carya tomentosa*  
Shagbark hickory - *Carya ovata* St  
Red hickory - *Carya ovalis* St  
Bitternut hickory - *Carya cordiformis* St  
White pine - *Pinus strobus* E, F  
Pitch pine - *Pinus rigida* E, F  
Black birch - *Betula lenta* AS  
Sugar maple - *Acer saccharum* AS  
Basswood - *Tilia americana* St  
Black cherry - *Prunus serotina* St  
Sassafras - *Sassafras albidum* F  
Bigoooth Aspen - *Populus grandidentata* F  
Common Hackberry - *Celtis occidentalis* St  
Downy serviceberry - *Amelanchier arborea* U, AS  
Allegheny serviceberry - *Amelanchier laevis* U, AS  
Hop hornbeam - *Ostrya virginiana* U, AS  
Flowering dogwood - *Cornus florida* U, AS  
Witch hazel - *Hamamelis virginiana* S, AS  
Chokecherry - *Prunus virginiana*  
Winged Sumac - *Rhus copallina* F  
Blackhaw viburnum - *Viburnum prunifolium* S, AS  
American hazelnut - *Corylus americana* S, AS

**Trees in Bold  
are highest  
priority to  
plant**

**Trees  
from  
← either list →  
can be planted  
in sites with  
moist soil,  
not too  
wet or dry**

**Ask your local  
nursery/garden center to  
carry these species!  
And in small stock  
too!**

## KEY

E = Evergreen  
F = Full Sun  
AS = Requires Some  
Afternoon Shade  
U = Understory Tree  
S = Tall Shrub  
St = Street Tolerant

## VALLEYS or LOWLANDS

White oak - *Quercus alba*  
Swamp white oak - *Quercus bicolor* St  
Shagbark hickory - *Carya ovata* St  
Bitternut hickory - *Carya cordiformis* St  
Black gum - *Nyssa sylvatica* St  
Grey birch - *Betula populifolia* St, F  
Yellow birch - *Betula alleghaniensis* AS  
Sugar maple - *Acer saccharum* AS  
Red maple - *Acer rubrum* St  
American elm - *Ulmus americana*  
Slippery elm - *Ulmus rubra*  
Basswood - *Tilia americana* St  
Sycamore - *Platanus occidentalis* St  
Tulip tree - *Liriodendron tulipifera* St  
Serviceberry - *Amelanchier canadensis* U, AS  
Pagoda dogwood - *Cornus alternifolia* U, AS  
American hornbeam - *Carpinus caroliniana* U, AS  
Black elderberry - *Sambucus nigra* S  
Highbush blueberry - *Vaccinium corymbosum* S, AS  
Winterberry holly - *Ilex verticillata* S, AS  
Grey Dogwood - *Cornus racemosa* S, AS  
Red-osier Dogwood - *Cornus sericea* S, AS  
Silky Dogwood - *Cornus amomum* S, AS  
Pussy Willow - *Salix discolor* S, F  
Nannyberry - *Viburnum lentago* S, AS

# Optimal Tree Attributes & Planting Considerations

For: Suburban Yards, Shade Replacement Ordinances,  
Windbreaks, Woodlots, & Forests

**We must plant the right trees in the right way to ensure we have a future forest<sup>1</sup>**

**1. SELECT MULTIPLE SPECIES FROM THE ATTACHED LIST to:**

- Plant in open areas to reforest (remove/reduce lawn)
- Replace removed or fallen trees
- Reforest in canopy gaps, under declining trees, or as part of a forest restoration

**2. LOCAL ECOTYPE** - progeny from NJ or better yet, your county or ecoregion are best suited for your local landscapes.

**3. SMALLER SIZES** include tubelings, 1 gal - 7 gal size

- container grown stock is preferred! (not rootbound)
- Greater chance of survival and success vs. larger stock <sup>2,3</sup>
- Grows faster than larger stock (e.g. B&B >2" caliper size)
- Suffer less from transplant stock = fewer disease issues
- Grows healthier, short term & long term
- Most environmentally sustainable option
- Most economic option

**4. RESTORE DEGRADED SOILS** before planting by mixing in composted leaf litter and/or organic garden soil.

**5. PLANT DENSE STANDS** of many saplings, not just one or two trees; use 3-10 ft spacing and 10-20 per each large tree lost.

- This planting style is natural as trees live in communities
- Their root systems interlock and protect from windthrow

**6. PREVENT DEER DAMAGE** - use physical barriers to stop buck rub and deer browse.

- Best options allow air passage, are rigid, require infrequent upkeep, and 6 ft. tall

**7. LEAVE THE LEAVES** - The best type of mulch! Fallen leaves have evolved with trees and ecosystems<sup>4</sup> to:

- Nourish soil life
- Provide plant health naturally
- Improve plant & climate resiliency
- Support native biodiversity

**Never volcano mulch!**



← 1 YR. OLD  
PIGNUT  
HICKORY  
SEEDLING IN A  
TREE TUBE  
(OR TUBELING  
) WHICH  
ALLOWS DEEP  
TAPROOT  
GROWTH.  
THIS IS THE  
IDEAL  
PLANTING SIZE  
& STOCK FOR  
HICKORIES

6FT. CAGE,  
PVC-COATED  
WIRE MESH,  
PROTECTING  
A BITTERNUT  
HICKORY  
SAPLING

UPDATED  
11/2025

1. Epiphany, J.N., S.N. Handel., and S.S. Mangiafico. 2025. Disturbance in the Forest of Morristown National Historical Park: Influence of Gap Size on Tree Regeneration. Natural Resource Report NPS/MORR/NRR-2025. National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado.
2. Harris, J.R. and Bassuk, N.L., 1993. Tree planting fundamentals. *Journal of Arboriculture*, 19, p.67
3. Tallamy, D.W., 2021. *The Nature of Oaks: the rich ecology of our most essential native trees*. Timber Press.
4. Epiphany, J. 2025. Why Leave the Leaves and How to Do it. Rutgers Fact Sheet FS1369: Why Leave the Leaves and How to Do it (Rutgers NJAES)