Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants You May Find at Your Local Nursery

INVASIVE plant – Japanese Spirea

Japanese Spirea or Japanese Meadowsweet - *Spirea japonica*

Deciduous shrub with white to pink flowers.
Leaves change color over the season.
Grows 4-6 ft high and wide.
An aggressive self-seeder that has escaped gardens and naturalized in many areas of the eastern US, where it competes with native species.
Also spreads by suckering.
Very high-maintenance with a rapid growth rate.

Native to Eastern Asia.
Introduced to the US as an ornamental in the late 1800s.

Many different cultivars are available in nurseries with varying colored leaves.

Native Alternative

New Jersey Tea
Ceanothus americanus

Deciduous shrub, host for many pollinators.
Low growing with rounded crown.
3' tall by 5' wide.
Blooms: fragrant white flowers in May-June
Great for erosion control.
Native Americans used as tea to treat respiratory infections.

Native Alternative

Coastal Witch-alder or
Dwarf Fothergilla
Fothergilla gardenii

Low-maintenance deciduous shrub
3-6' tall by 2-6' wide.
Blooms: white bottle-brush, honey-scented flowers emerge before leaves in spring.
Vibrant red, orange and yellow fall leaf color.
Flower display and fall color best in full sun.

Native alternative

Meadowsweet
Spirea alba

Deciduous shrub.
Fragrant flowers over long bloom season.
Beautiful yellow fall foliage.
3-4' tall by 3-4' wide.
Blooms: June - September.
Full sun - part shade.
Attracts a variety of pollinators.
Larval host plant to Spring Azure butterfly.

Photos borrowed from the North Carolina State University Extension Webpage - through the CCPL
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Photographs:

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New Jersey Tea - *Ceanothus americanus:* Randy Harter – CC BY 4.0

Coastal Witch-alder, Dwarf Fothergilla - *Fothergilla gardenia:* Maggie – CC BY-NC 2.0

Meadowsweet - *Spirea alba: Yooperann* – CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Sources for purchasing native plants:

Native Plant Nurseries in Virginia

- Hill House Farm and Nursery – Castleton, VA
- Hummingbird Hill Native Plant Nursery, - Charlottesville, VA
- Reedy Creek Environmental – Richmond, VA

Virginia Native Plant Society chapter plant sales - See VNPS Webpage for links to chapters

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden - Spring and fall plant sales

Online Resources:

- Prairie Moon Nursery
- Gardens of the Blueridge
- Prairie Nursery
- Direct Native Plants
- Mid- Atlantic Natives

And, if your favorite nursery does not have a large selection of native plants, ask them to get more.

H.O.P.E. From the Garden

Helping Our Planet Endure

Goochland-Powhatan
Master Gardener Association

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