

## Evergreen Groundcovers

by Pat Lust, Extension Master Gardener  
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Wintergreen, my favorite evergreen ground cover, grows right next to my favorite chair on my patio. In summer it provides a wonderful dark green carpet and then in winter the beautiful red berries are accompanied by red-tinged green leaves.

In Virginia we are fortunate to be able to grow a wide variety of evergreen and semi-evergreen ground covers (or green mulch), including these:



Wintergreen - *Gaultheria procumbens*

Photo by Pat Lust

- **Wintergreen** - *Gaultheria procumbens* - Evergreen shrub – 6” – Native to most of Virginia
- **Partridgeberry** - *Mitchella repens* - Evergreen perennial – 1-2” – Native in Virginia
- **Creeping Thyme** - *Thymus serpyllum* - Evergreen perennial – 4-8” – Native to Europe, friendly non-native in Virginia
- **Creeping Phlox** - *Phlox subulata* - Evergreen perennial – 6-8” – Native to central and western Virginia
- **Christmas Ferns** - *Polystichum acrostichoides* - Evergreen perennial – 1-2’ - Native to all of Virginia
- **Downy Rattlesnake Plantain** - *Goodyera pubescens* - Evergreen perennial – 2-4” (flowers up to 14”) – Native to all of Virginia
- **Foxglove Beard-tongue** - *Penstemon digitalis* - Semi-evergreen perennial - Native near VA, friendly non-native in Virginia
- **Wild Strawberry** - *Fragaria virginiana* - Semi-evergreen – 4-8” – Native to all of Virginia
- **Common Violets** – *Viola sororia* - Semi-evergreen - 6-10” - Native to most of Virginia
- **Pussytoes** – *Antennaria plantaginifolia* - Semi-evergreen – 4-6” (flowers up to 14”) – Native to all of Virginia
- **Green and gold** - *Chrysogonum virginianum* - Semi-evergreen – 2-3” – Native to most of Virginia
- **Allegheny Spurge** - *Pachysandra procumbens* - Semi-evergreen perennial – 4-9” – Native near VA, friendly non-native in Virginia
- **Blue-eyed Grass** - *Sisyrinchium angustifolium* - Semi-evergreen perennial -12-15” Native to all of Virginia

### Resources

Digital Atlas of the Virginia Flora - <https://www.vaplantatlas.org/>

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center - <https://www.wildflower.org/plants>

NCSU Plant Toolbox - <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/>