Best Bets: Plants for Particular Uses in the Mid-Atlantic

Ferns

- Royal Fern (Osmunda spectabilis)
- Cinnamon Fern (Osmundastrum cinnamomeum)

Grasses, Sedges, & Rushes

- Common Rush (Juncus effusus)
- Switchgrass (Panicum virgatum)

Perennials

- Swamp Milkweed (Asclepias incarnata)
- White Turtlehead (Chelone glabra)
- Three-nerved Joe-pye-weed (Eutrochium dubium)
- Blue Flag Irises (Iris virginica & Iris versicolor)
- Lobelias (Lobelia cardinalis & Lobelia siphilitica)
- Virginia Bluebells (Mertensia virginica)
- Scarlet Beebalm (Monarda didyma)
- Rough-stemmed Goldenrod (Solidago rugosa)
- Blue Vervain (Verbena hastata)

Shrubs

- Buttonbush (Cephalanthus occidentalis)
- Sweet Pepperbush (Clethra alnifolia)
- Inkberry (Ilex glabra)
- Winterberry (Ilex verticillata)
- Virginia Sweetspire (Itea virginica)
- Highbush Blueberry (Vaccinium corymbosum)

Possum-haw (Viburnum nudum)

Trees

- River Birch (Betula nigra)
- Sweetgum (Liquidambar styraciflua)
- Sweetbay Magnolia (Magnolia virginiana)
- Bald Cypress (Taxodium distichum)

These plants help control storm water runoff and ponding by absorbing excess moisture. They are well-suited to conditions in rain gardens, in low spots that collect water, near downspouts, or along water’s edge.

Learn More about These Plants

For detailed, individual plant fact sheets, use the Latin name hyperlinks in this table or visit Tried & True Native Plants: Mid-Atlantic on mgnv.org.


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Images by Mary Free (irises in Connecticut) and by Elaine Mills (landscapes in Maryland and Virginia)