

Plants for Wet Areas

One of the biggest challenges for the homeowner is poorly drained soil. Excessive moisture in the soil can suffocate plant roots as it displaces oxygen. Even though standing water is not present, poor drainage is often responsible for plants not thriving or even dying.

If you are not sure about your drainage, a simple test will give you an idea. Dig a hole about 1 foot deep and fill it with water. Time how long it takes the water to soak into the ground. If it takes 20-30 minutes, you have fairly good drainage. If the hole still has water an hour later, you have a drainage problem.

The first thing that should be addressed is to try to improve the growing conditions by creating raised beds, swales, and drainage lines to help divert excess water away from plants. Secondly, you can incorporate plants that are tolerant of varying degrees of wet conditions.

Trees

Eastern Arborvitae, *Thuja occidentalis*
River Birch, *Betula nigra*
Atlantic White Cedar, *Chamaecyparis thyoides*
Magnolia, southern, *Magnolia grandiflora*
Magnolia, sweetbay, *Magnolia virginiana*
Red Maple, *Acer rubrum*
Serviceberry, *Amelanchier canadensis*
White Spruce, *Picea glauca*
Willow, *Salix species*

Shrubs

Anise Tree, *Illicium species*
Bayberry, *Myrica species*
Blueberry, *Vaccinium corymbosum*
Red-twigged Dogwood, *Cornus sericea*
Elderberry, *Sambucus canadensis*
Fothergilla, *Fothergilla species*
Inkberry, *Ilex glabra*
Leucothoe, *Leucothoe fontanesiana*
Ninebark, *Physocarpus opulifolius*
Rose of Sharon, *Hibiscus syriacus*
Summersweet, *Clethra alnifolia*
Sweetspire, *Itea virginica*
Viburnum Cranberry, *Viburnum opulus*

Perennials

Astilbe, *Astilbe species*
Bellflower, *Campanula glomerata*
Cardinal Flower, *Lobelia cardinalis*
Siberian Iris, *Iris siberica*
Water Iris, *Iris ensata*
Joe Pye Weed, *Eupatorium dubium*
Ligularia, *Ligularis species*
Loosestrife Gooseneck, *Lysimachia clethroides*
Marigold Marsh, *Caltha palustris*
Rosemallow, *Hibiscus moscheutos*
Spiderwort, *Tradescantia virginica*
Sweetflag, *Acorus species*
Turtlehead, *Chelone species*

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