

Native Understory Tree and Shrub Recommendations for Bird Sanctuaries

Planting a rich diversity of understory layers beneath large canopy trees provides the ideal habitat for birds. The Southeastern US has several thousand species of native plants, so the choices are abundant. The following native small trees and shrubs have been selected because they are particularly helpful to birds. They are host plants for large numbers of insect species, which resident and migratory birds need for their nutrition and to raise their young (especially caterpillars.) These natives also provide nutritious berries, seeds, flower buds, nectar and pollen. In addition, they are highly ornamental. **Be sure to verify the scientific name of any plants you purchase.**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Height X Width Mature Size	Deciduous or Evergreen	Flower Color	Seed Pod/ Berry Color	Sun Exposure
Small Trees						
<i>Aesculus parviflora</i>	Bottlebrush Buckeye	15' X 10'	deciduous	white	tan	part sun to shade
<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	Downy Serviceberry	20' X 15'	deciduous	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>	Shadblow Serviceberry	30' X 15'	deciduous	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Asimina triloba**</i>	Paw Paw	25' X 25'	deciduous	maroon	yellow	full sun to part shade
<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	American Hornbeam (Musclewood)	35' X 35'	deciduous	white	tan	part shade to shade
<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	Redbud	30' X 30'	deciduous	pink	brown	full sun to part shade
<i>Chionanthus virginicus*</i>	Fringe Tree	20' X 20'	deciduous	white	black	full sun to part shade
<i>Cornus florida</i>	Flowering Dogwood	25' X 20'	deciduous	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Cornus amomum</i>	Silky Dogwood	12' X 12'	deciduous	white	blue	part shade to shade
<i>Crataegus phaenopyrum</i>	Washington Hawthorn	30' X 30'	deciduous	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Crataegus viridis 'Winter King'</i>	Winter King Green Hawthorn	30' X 30'	deciduous	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Hamelis vernalis</i>	Ozark Witch Hazel	15' X 15'	deciduous	yellow/red	tan	full sun to part shade
<i>Hamelis virginiana</i>	Witch Hazel	20' X 20'	deciduous	yellow/red	brown	full sun to part shade
<i>Ilex decidua*</i>	Possumhaw holly	15' X 15'	deciduous	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Ilex opaca*</i>	American Holly	30' X 20'	evergreen	white	red/orange	full sun to part shade
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	Sweetbay Magnolia	35' X 35'	semi-evergreen	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Malus angustifolia</i>	Southern Crabapple	25' X 20'	deciduous	pink	gold	full sun to part shade
<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	Hopornbeam (Ironwood)	40' X 30'	deciduous	light green	light green	full sun to part shade
<i>Prunus americana</i>	American Plum	20' X 20'	deciduous	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Prunus caroliniana</i>	Carolina Cherry Laurel	35' X 20'	evergreen	white	black	full sun to part shade
<i>Quercus prinoides</i>	Dwarf Chinkapin Oak	20' X 20'	deciduous	tan	brown	full sun to part shade
<i>Rhus typhina</i>	Staghorn Sumac	20' X 20'	deciduous	yellow	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Viburnum prunifolium**</i>	Blackhaw Viburnum	20' X 10'	deciduous	white	black	full sun to part shade
<i>Viburnum rufidulum**</i>	Southern Rusty Blackhaw	20' X 15'	deciduous	white	red/purple	full sun to part shade

Shrubs

<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>	Red Chokeberry	8' X 5'	deciduous	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Aronia melanocarpa</i>	Black Chokeberry	8' X 6'	deciduous	white	black	full sun to part shade
<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	American Beautyberry	8' X 8'	deciduous	white to pink	purple	full sun to shade
<i>Calycanthus floridus</i>	Carolina allspice	8' X 8'	deciduous	maroon	brown	part sun to shade
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	Buttonbush	10' X 8'	deciduous	white	brown	full sun to part shade
<i>Clethra spp.</i>	Summersweet-several species	6' X 5'	deciduous	white/pink	silver	full sun to shade
<i>Euonymus americanus***</i>	Hearts-a-bustin	6' X 4'	deciduous	lime	red	part sun to shade
<i>Hydrangea quercifolia</i>	Oakleaf Hydrangea	8' X 8'	deciduous	white	tan	full sun to shade
<i>Hypericum spp.</i>	St. John's Wort-several species	6' X 5'	deciduous	yellow	tan	full sun to part shade
<i>Ilex glabra*</i>	Inkberry - see note	8' X 8'	evergreen	white	black	full sun to part shade
<i>Ilex verticillata*</i>	Winterberry	8' X 8'	deciduous	white	red	full sun to part shade
<i>Ilex vomitoria*</i>	Yaupon holly	10' X 10'	evergreen	white	red	full sun to shade
<i>Itea virginica</i>	Virginia sweetspire	6' X 6'	deciduous	white	tan	full sun to part shade
<i>Lindera benzoin*</i>	Spicebush	10' X 6'	deciduous	yellow	red	full sun to shade
<i>Rhus aromatica</i>	Fragrant Sumac	6' X 8'	deciduous	pale yellow	tan	full sun to part shade
<i>Viburnum acerifolium**</i>	Mapleleaf Viburnum	4' X 4'	deciduous	white	black	full sun to part shade
<i>Viburnum dentatum**</i>	Arrowwood Viburnum	8' X 10'	deciduous	white	black	full sun to shade

* Dioecious. - Male and female flowers are on separate plants. Must have at least one male plant for female plants to produce fruit.

** Plants will produce more berries if you plant more than one plant for cross pollination.

*** Be very careful to purchase this natives species and not the highly invasive exotic.

Note - Male inkberry plants are not currently available in the nursery trade.

Native Plant Nurseries:

Growild	http://www.growildinc.com/
Izel Plants (mail order only)	www.izelplants.com
Nearly Native Nursery	http://www.nearlynativenursery.com/index1.cfm
Reflection Riding	https://reflectionriding.org/101.110
Tennessee Naturoscapes	www.tennesseenasaturoscapes.com
Wild Ones Plant Sales	https://middletennessee.wildones.org/ https://tnvalleywildones.org/native-plants/

Other sources for native trees:

Nashville Tree Conservation Corps	https://www.nashvilletreeconservationcorps.org	Davidson County only
Root Nashville	https://rootnashville.org	Davidson County only
Nashville Tree Foundation	https://www.nashvilletreefoundation.org	Davidson County only
Tennessee Environmental Council	https://www.tecnc.org	

Other Nurseries that carry natives:

Bates Nursery	https://www.batesnursery.com/	
Gardens of Babylon Garden Center	https://gardensofbabylon.com/	
Moore and Moore Garden Center	https://www.mooreandmoore.com/	
Rock Bridge Trees	https://rockbridgetrees.com/	
Thomas Nursery	http://www.thomasnurserytrees.com/	Wholesale nursery - will sell directly to public