Drought Tolerant Landscape Plants

Common Name	Latin name	Characteristics	Ecosystem Services
Sugar Maple	Acer saccharum	Medium/large tree (to 100') with orange-red fall color. Grows in upland forests. Intolerant of poorly drained soil.	Seeds eaten by many songbirds and squirrels. Deer feed on twigs, buds and leaves.
Red Buckeye	Aesculus pavia	Understory shrub to 10' with bright red flowers	Attracts hummingbirds. Seeds eaten by squirrels but toxic to livestock.
Wild Ginger	Asarum canadense	Shade to part shade. Low ground cover, spreads by rhizomes to form colonies.	Dark red flower pollinated by flies and beetles.
Pipe Vine	Aristolochia macrophylla	Fast growing vine with 6", heart shaped leaves. Greenish yellow flower with curved throat. Part shade to sun. Occurs in low, alluvial woods near streams.	Food for pipe vine swallowtail larvae. Fly pollinated due to floral odor.
Wild Indigo	Baptisia tinctoria	Upright 2-3', clumping perennial with deep roots adapted to open woods and fields. Yellow, pea-like flowers in late spring. Needs well drained soil.	Fixes atmospheric nitrogen. Nectar for hummingbirds and pollinators. Seeds eaten by birds and small mammals.
Bush's Poppy Mallow	Callirhoe bushii	Perennial for sun or part shade. Upright to 4', support or allow to trail among other perennials. Showy magenta flowers in mid summer. May re-bloom in fall.	Provides nectar for bumblebees.
Musclewood	Carpinus caroliniana	Understory tree to 35 feet found on rocky slopes along streams. Trunk rippled (muscle-like). Wood extremely hard. Used to make golf clubs.	Seeds, buds and flowers eaten by many birds, including grouse, quail and turkeys.
New Jersey Tea	Ceanothus americanus	Spreading shrub to 3'. Found in upland or rocky prairies or open woods. Pink fragrant flowers in June, attractive orange fruit in July.	Leaves eaten by deer and fruit by turkeys. Fixes atmospheric nitrogen in the soil.
Fringe Tree	Chionanthus virginicus	Shrub or small tree to 30' found on wooded ledges and wooded slopes near streams.	Nectar source for insects. Fruit eaten by birds.
Yellowwood	Cladrastus kentuckea	Medium tree with beautiful, fragrant flower dusters and interesting bark in winter.	Nectar source for butterflies and moths.
Smoke Tree	Cotinus obovatus	Tall shrub to 30' found on limestone glades and rocky bluffs. Interesting roundish leaves turn brilliant orange/red in fall. Gets its common name from smoke-like appearance of inflorescence in late summer.	Tiny fruits probably eaten by various birds in fall.
Persimmon	Diospyros virginiana	Tree to 60 feet with unique blackish bark with deep grooves, ridges and blocks. Dioecious with females producing globe shaped, orange fruit.	Fruit eaten by birds, raccoons, possums, foxes, skunk and deer. Highly favored by fall webworm. Wood used for making golf clubs.
Wahoo	Euonymus atropurpureus	Shrub to 25', found in open woods near streams. Bright pink capsules split open in fall to expose orange seed covers. Excellent red fall color. An alternative to invasive burning bush.	Fruit eaten by many birds, including turkey. Leaves and stems eaten by deer and rabbits.
Wild Geranium	Geranium maculatum	Dainty woodland plant that prefers moist, humus rich soil but tolerates average, well drained soil. Pink to lilac blooms in April/May. Goes dormant if soil dries out.	Seeds eaten by birds. Provides nectar for butterflies and other beneficial insects.
Rose Verbena	Glandularia canadensis	Trailing ground cover for full sun. Tolerates drought. Good for rock gardens. Deep pink flowers from March through May, then sporadically.	Attracts butterflies and other insects.
Kentucky Coffee Tree	Gymnocladus dioica	Medium sized tree to 60' producing filtered shade from huge, pi-pinnately compound leaves and large pods containing hard seeds. Expresso = male clone	Food source for Honey Locust Moth.
Ozark Witch Hazel	Hamamelis vernalis	Dense, rounded shrub to 10' found in rocky stream beds and slopes near streams. Yellow to red, fragrant flowers February-April. Good yellow fall leaf color. pH tolerant.	Browsed by deer. Bark eaten by beavers, squirrels and rabbits. Seeds and flowers eaten by turkey and ruffed grouse. Early nectar source.
Possum Haw	llex decidua	Shrub or small tree to 30' found in limestone glades, open woods and low, wet woods near streams. Deciduous holly producing copious, red fruits in October that persist into the winter.	Fruits eaten by possum and quail and other birds. Some plants may have only male flowers.
Tulip Tree	Liriodendron tulipifera	Large (100') tree with long, clear trunk. Old growth stands are cathedral-like.	Tiger swallowtail larvae food and nectar source for pollinators. Seeds eaten by birds, squirrels and rabbits.
Blackgum	Nyssa sylvatica	Medium-sized, tidy-looking tree with glossy leaves and beautiful red fall color. Attractive, blue-black fruits in fall.	Small flowers attractive to bees. Food for Hebrew Moth. Seeds eaten by 32 sp of birds, racoons, foxes, deer and bears.
Missouri Primrose	Oenothera macrocarpa	Trailing perennial for full sun with showy yellow blooms in May/June. Tolerates poor soil and drought but needs good drainage.	Pollinated by hummingbird moth.
Hop Hornbeam	Ostrya virginiana	Small, rounded tree to 25' found on dry, rocky slopes in upland woods. Gusters of hop-like fruit. Extremely hard wood, second only to dogwood.	Fruits eaten by by quail and wild turkey. Catkins and buds eaten by roughed grouse in fall and winter.

Quaking Aspen	Populus tremuloides	Tree to 60 feet with flattened petioles allowing leaves to flutter in wind. White bark when young. Adaptable to soils and environments. Large colonies from root suckers.	Seeds eaten by birds. Buds, twigs and bark eaten by beavers and deer.
Choke Cherry	Prunus virginiana	Large suckering shrub or small tree to 30'. Occurs on north facing, wooded slopes but adapts to many environments. White flower clusters in April and copious dark red fruit in fall.	Fruit eaten by many songbirds and game birds as well as mammals.
Hop Tree	Ptelea trifoliata	Rounded shrub (Gtrus family) to 25' occurring on limestone glades, prairies and open woods, but tolerates shade well. Clusters of winged fruit in fall.	Foliage is food for Giant Swallowtail larvae.
Bur Oak	Quercus macrocarpa	Medium (80') broad spreading tree with massive trunk. Difficult to transplant but adaptable once established. Massive, hairy acorns and leaves to 1'.	Acorns eaten by woodpeckers, raccoons and deer. Foliage eaten by a wide range of beneficial insect larvae.
Overcup Oak	Quercus Lyrata	Long-lived tree to 80 feet, found in bottomland forest borders and swamps. Easier to transplant than white oak.	Acorns eaten by woodpeckers, wood ducks, squirrels, raccoons and deer. Foliar-feeding larvae food source for baby birds.
Golden Currant	Ribes ordoratum	Upright, spineless shrub to 6' found on exposed limestone bluffs. Golden, fragrant flower clusters, April-June. Black berries June-August.	Fruit eaten by various birds, squirrels and chipmunks.
Sassafras	Sassafras album	Medium tree to 60' occurring on dry woods borders, roadsides. Aromatic leaves with 0-3 lobes turning orange to scarlet in early fall. Forms colonies from root suckers.	Dark blue 1/2" fruit in Sept-Oct eaten by at least 28 species of birds. Leaves eaten by deer, rabbit, bear and larvae of moths and butterflies.
Little Bluestem	Schizachyrium scoparium	Oumping, 24" grass for full sun. Foliage blue green in summer, turning reddish in fall. Needs good drainage.	Provides food and cover for wildlife.
Squaw-weed (Golden Groundsel)	Senecio obovatus (Packera obovata)	Evergreen, rosette-forming ground cover for dry shade with yellow flowers in April/May on upright, 18" stalks. Spreads quickly by stolons.	Flowers attract bees and butterflies in early spring.
Bald Cypress	Taxodium distichum	Large, deciduous conifer with lacy leaves turning rusty yellowish-brown in fall. Tolerates extremes in soil moisture.	Seeds eaten by many bird species
Black Haw	Viburnum prunifolium	Shrub or small tree to 20' found in low woods along streams. Adaptable to various soil and light conditions. Qusters of creamy flower in Ap. Qusters of 1/2" multicolored fruit in fall.	Fruit eaten by cardinals, cedar waxwing, robin, grouse and turkey.