

Deer Browse Preferences for Common Indicator Plants in Massachusetts

Preferred

Would expect browsing even at low deer densities (e.g., 6-18 deer per square mile of forest)

<u>Trees</u>	<u>Shrubs</u>	<u>Herbaceous</u>
Arborvitae	Common Buckthorn (inv.) <i>(sometimes moderate)</i>	Enchanter's Nightshade
Aspen (spp.) <i>(sometimes moderate)</i>	Dogwoods (spp.)	Evening Primrose
Cedar (Eastern Red and Atlantic White)	Multiflora rose <i>(young growth)</i>	Jewelweed (spotted touch-me-not)
Red Maple	Pin Cherry <i>(sometimes moderate)</i>	Lady's Slipper (Pink, Yellow, etc.)
Oak (spp.)	Raspberry/Blackberry <i>(young growth)</i>	Trillium (spp.)
Sugar Maple <i>(sometimes moderate)</i>	Sumac <i>(young growth)</i>	White Wood-aster
White Ash	Viburnum (Maple-leaf, Nannyberry, Hobble-bush)	Wild Sarsaparilla

Moderate-Preference

Unlikely to be browsed much at low deer densities, but typically browsed at medium to high deer densities

<u>Trees</u>	<u>Shrubs</u>	<u>Herbaceous</u>
Am. Beech <i>(sometimes lower-preference)</i>	Autumn Olive (inv.)	Aster (spp.)
Am. Chestnut	Beaked Hazlenut	Bracken Fern
Balsam Fir <i>(sometimes lower-preference)</i>	Choke Cherry	Canada Mayflower
Birch (spp.)	Greenbriar <i>(young growth preferred)</i>	Goldenrod (spp.)
Black Cherry <i>(sometimes preferred)</i>	Honeysuckle (spp.) (inv.)	Indian Cucumber-root
Hemlock (winter browse)	High-bush and Low-bush Blueberry	Trout Lily
Hickory (spp.) <i>(sometimes preferred)</i>	Oriental Bittersweet (inv.)	
Sassafras	Winged Euonymus (inv.) <i>(sometimes preferred)</i>	
	Witch Hazel	

Low-Preference

Typically avoided or only browsed at very high deer densities (e.g., above ~ 50 deer per square mile of forest)

<u>Trees</u>	<u>Shrubs</u>	<u>Herbaceous</u>
Pine (Pitch, Red, White)	Glossy Buckthorn (inv.) <i>(sometimes moderate)</i>	Ferns (most spp.) <i>(sometimes moderate)</i>
Norway Maple (inv.)	Japanese Barberry (inv.)	Garlic-mustard (inv.)
Spruce (spp.)	Mountain Laurel	Jack-in-the-pulpit
Striped Maple <i>(moose eat it)</i>	Rhododendron	Milkweed
	Sheep Laurel	Pennsylvania Sedge
	Sweet Fern	Skunk-cabbage

Notes: Many of these plants see regional and seasonal variation in browsing preference, and have varying degrees in their ability to survive and withstand browsing pressure (e.g. American Beech is very browse-tolerant).

Deer may prefer stump sprouts and suckers over seedlings and reachable branches, often from less-preferred trees.

Some less-preferred evergreens may be browsed in winters where snow depth limits mobility of deer.

(spp.) = several species included

(inv.) = invasive

last edited: 08/29/16