



Native Wetland Trees of Georgia

Dr. Kim D. Coder, Professor of Tree Biology & Health Care / University Hill Fellow
University of Georgia Warnell School of Forestry & Natural Resources

A number of native trees can grow under wetland and flooding soil conditions. Some tree species are so indicative of wetland conditions they can be used for regulatory wetland classifications. For planting purposes or when soil water requirements must be changed, proper tree species selection is critical when a site will be under excessive soil water contents and/or low soil oxygen conditions for a significant part of the year.

Wetland trees can be a good planting choice under many soil constraints which impact aeration, drainage, and compaction conditions. Continuous and non-flowing (stagnant) water and constant soil saturation, especially when water is standing above the soil surface throughout a major portion of, or the entire growing season, is an excessively harsh growing environment for most trees, even wetland species.

Below are figures which present the scientific name, common name, and select foliage characteristics of many native wetland trees of Georgia. Note this is not a comprehensive list of native wetland trees, but contains many of the more common native wetland tree species of Georgia. Figure 1 presents the foliage attributes or characteristics key / codes for each tree species with symbols used in the subsequent figures. Figure 2 provides a list of native wetland tree species sorted alphabetically by scientific name. Figure 3 provides the same native wetland tree species list, but sorted alphabetically by common name.

Remember a “native wetland tree species” can be defined as:

- A) a native species found growing and reproducing naturally in the state of Georgia, and has not been introduced from outside the state;
- B) perennial woody plant which attains tree size and form (>15 feet tall with a single woody stem and distinct crown of foliage); and,
- C) continuing to survive, grow, and reproduce under wetland soil / site conditions for a significant portion of the year.

Citation:

Coder, Kim D. 2024. Native wetland trees of Georgia. University of Georgia, Warnell School of Forestry & Natural Resources Outreach Publication WSNR-24-2C. Pp.10.

The University of Georgia Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources offers educational programs, assistance, and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender, or disability.

The University of Georgia is committed to principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action.

CODE	FOLIAGE DESCRIPTION
D	= DECIDUOUS
E	= EVERGREEN
P	= PERSISTENT UNTIL SPRING
N	= NEEDLE / SCALE LEAVES
S	= SIMPLE LEAF
C	= COMPOUND LEAF
O	= OPPOSITE LEAF
	ATTACHMENTS (2 PER NODE)
A	= ALTERNATE LEAF
	ATTACHMENTS (1 PER NODE)
W	= WHIRLED LEAF
	ATTACHMENTS (>2 PER NODE)

Figure 1: List of foliage attribute / character codes used to describe native wetland tree species.

Figure 2: List of native wetland tree species sorted alphabetically by scientific name, including common name, and select foliage characteristics.

scientific name	common name	foliage
		attributes
<i>Acer negundo</i>	boxelder	D C O
<i>Acer rubrum</i>	red maple	D S O
<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	silver maple	D S O
<i>Alnus maritima</i>	seaside alder	D S A
<i>Alnus serrulata</i>	hazel alder	D S A
<i>Baccharis halimifolia</i>	Eastern baccharis	E S A
<i>Betula nigra</i>	river birch	D S A
<i>Carya aquatica</i>	water hickory	D C A
<i>Carya laciniosa</i>	shellbark hickory	D C A
<i>Carya myristiciformis</i>	nutmeg hickory	D C A
<i>Celtis laevigata</i>	sugarberry	D S A
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	buttonbush	D S O/W
<i>Chamaecyparis thyoides</i>	Atlantic whitecedar	E N
<i>Cliftonia monophylla</i>	buckwheat tree	E S A
<i>Cornus amomum</i>	silky dogwood	D S O
<i>Cornus asperifolia</i>	toughleaf dogwood	D S O
<i>Cornus foemina</i>	stiff dogwood	D S O
<i>Crataegus aestivalis</i>	mayhaw	D S A
<i>Crataegus brachyacantha</i>	blueberry hawthorn	D S A
<i>Crataegus marshallii</i>	parsley hawthorn	D S A
<i>Crataegus spathulata</i>	little-hip hawthorn	D S A
<i>Crataegus viridis</i>	green hawthorn	D S A
<i>Cyrilla parvifolia</i>	littleleaf titi	E S A
<i>Cyrilla racemiflora</i>	swamp titi	P/E S A

Figure 2: List of native wetland tree species sorted alphabetically by scientific name, including common name, and select foliage characteristics. (continued)

scientific name	common name	foliage
		attributes
<i>Forestiera acuminata</i>	swamp-privet	D S O
<i>Fraxinus caroliniana</i>	Carolina ash	D C O
<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	green ash	D C O
<i>Fraxinus profunda</i>	pumpkin ash	D C O
<i>Gleditsia aquatica</i>	water locust	D C A
<i>Gordonia lasianthus</i>	loblolly bay	E S A
<i>Ilex amelanchier</i>	sarvis holly	D S A
<i>Ilex cassine</i>	dahoon	E S A
<i>Ilex coriacea</i>	large gallberry	E S A
<i>Ilex cuthbertii</i>	Cuthbert holly	D S A
<i>Ilex decidua</i>	possumhaw	D S A
<i>Ilex laevigata</i>	smooth winterberry	D S A
<i>Ilex myrtifolia</i>	myrtle dahoon	E S A
<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	winterberry	D S A
<i>Illicium floridanum</i>	Florida anisetree	E S A
<i>Illicium parviflorum</i>	yellow anisetree	E S A
<i>Leitneria floridana</i>	corkwood	D S A
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	sweetbay	P/E S A
<i>Morella caroliniensis</i>	Southern bayberry	E S A
<i>Morella inodora</i>	odorless bayberry	E S A
<i>Nyssa aquatica</i>	water tupelo	D S A

Figure 2: List of native wetland tree species sorted alphabetically by scientific name, including common name, and select foliage characteristics. (continued)

scientific name	common name	foliage
		attributes
<i>Nyssa biflora</i>	swamp tupelo	D S A
<i>Nyssa ogeche</i>	Ogeeche-lime	D S A
<i>Persea borbonia</i>	red-bay	E S A
<i>Persea palustris</i>	swamp-bay	E S A
<i>Pinckneya bracteata</i>	fevertree	D S O
<i>Pinus elliotii</i>	slash pine	E N
<i>Pinus glabra</i>	spruce pine	E N
<i>Pinus serotina</i>	pond pine	E N
<i>Planera aquatica</i>	planertree	D S A
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	American sycamore	D S A
<i>Populus deltoides</i>	Eastern cottonwood	D S A
<i>Populus heterophylla</i>	swamp cottonwood	D S A
<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	swamp white oak	D S A
<i>Quercus laurifolia</i>	swamp laurel oak	P/E S A
<i>Quercus lyrata</i>	overcup oak	D S A
<i>Quercus michauxii</i>	swamp chestnut oak	D S A
<i>Quercus pagoda</i>	cherrybark oak	D S A
<i>Quercus palustris</i>	pin oak	D S A
<i>Quercus phellos</i>	willow oak	D S A
<i>Quercus similis</i>	swamp post oak	D S A
<i>Salix caroliniana</i>	Coastal Plain willow	D S A
<i>Salix eriocephala</i>	Missouri River willow	D S A
<i>Salix floridana</i>	Florida willow	D S A

Figure 2: List of native wetland tree species sorted alphabetically by scientific name, including common name, and select foliage characteristics. (continued)

scientific name	common name	foliage
		attributes
<i>Salix nigra</i>	black willow	D S A
<i>Salix sericea</i>	silky willow	D S A
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	American elder	D C O
<i>Sambucus simpsonii</i>	Southern elder	D C O
<i>Sideroxylon alachuense</i>	Alachua bully	E S A
<i>Sideroxylon lycioides</i>	buckthorn bumelia	E S A
<i>Sideroxylon tenax</i>	tough bumelia	E S A
<i>Styrax americanus</i>	American snowbell	D S A
<i>Taxodium ascendens</i>	pond-cypress	D N
<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	bald-cypress	D N
<i>Toxicodendron vernix</i>	poison sumac	D C A
<i>Ulmus americana</i>	American elm	D S A
<i>Viburnum nudum</i>	Southern possumhaw	D S O
<i>Viburnum obovatum</i>	small-leaf arrowwood	D S O
<i>Viburnum recognitum</i>	Southern arrowwood	D S O

Figure 3: List of native wetland tree species sorted alphabetically by common name, including scientific name, and select foliage characteristics.

scientific name	common name	foliage
		attributes
<i>Sideroxylon alachuense</i>	Alachua bully	E S A
<i>Styrax americanus</i>	American snowbell	D S A
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	American elder	D C O
<i>Ulmus americana</i>	American elm	D S A
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	American sycamore	D S A
<i>Chamaecyparis thyoides</i>	Atlantic whitecedar	E N
<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	bald-cypress	D N
<i>Salix nigra</i>	black willow	D S A
<i>Crataegus brachyacantha</i>	blueberry hawthorn	D S A
<i>Acer negundo</i>	boxelder	D C O
<i>Sideroxylon lycioides</i>	buckthorn bumelia	E S A
<i>Cliftonia monophylla</i>	buckwheat tree	E S A
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>	buttonbush	D S O/W
<i>Fraxinus caroliniana</i>	Carolina ash	D C O
<i>Quercus pagoda</i>	cherrybark oak	D S A
<i>Salix caroliniana</i>	Coastal Plain willow	D S A
<i>Leitneria floridana</i>	corkwood	D S A
<i>Ilex cuthbertii</i>	Cuthbert holly	D S A
<i>Ilex cassine</i>	dahoon	E S A
<i>Baccharis halimifolia</i>	Eastern baccharis	E SA
<i>Populus deltoides</i>	Eastern cottonwood	D S A

Figure 3: List of native wetland tree species sorted alphabetically by common name, including scientific name, and select foliage characteristics. (continued)

scientific name	common name	foliage
		attributes
<i>Pinckneya bracteata</i>	fevertree	D S O
<i>Illicium floridanum</i>	Florida anisetree	E S A
<i>Salix floridana</i>	Florida willow	D S A
<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	green ash	D C O
<i>Crataegus viridis</i>	green hawthorn	D S A
<i>Alnus serrulata</i>	hazel alder	D S A
<i>Ilex coriacea</i>	large gallberry	E S A
<i>Crataegus spathulata</i>	little-hip hawthorn	D S A
<i>Cyrilla parvifolia</i>	littleleaf titi	E S A
<i>Gordonia lasianthus</i>	loblolly bay	E S A
<i>Crataegus aestivalis</i>	mayhaw	D S A
<i>Salix eriocephala</i>	Missouri River willow	D S A
<i>Ilex myrtifolia</i>	myrtle dahoon	E S A
<i>Carya myristiciformis</i>	nutmeg hickory	D C A
<i>Morella inodora</i>	odorless bayberry	E S A
<i>Nyssa ogeche</i>	Ogeeche-lime	D S A
<i>Quercus lyrata</i>	overcup oak	D S A
<i>Crataegus marshallii</i>	parsley hawthorn	D S A
<i>Quercus palustris</i>	pin oak	D S A

Figure 3: List of native wetland tree species sorted alphabetically by common name, including scientific name, and select foliage characteristics. (continued)

scientific name	common name	foliage
		attributes
<i>Planera aquatica</i>	planertree	D S A
<i>Toxicodendron vernix</i>	poison sumac	D C A
<i>Taxodium ascendens</i>	pond-cypress	D N
<i>Pinus serotina</i>	pond pine	E N
<i>Ilex decidua</i>	possumhaw	D S A
<i>Fraxinus profunda</i>	pumpkin ash	D C O
<i>Persea borbonia</i>	red-bay	E S A
<i>Acer rubrum</i>	red maple	D S O
<i>Betula nigra</i>	river birch	D S A
<i>Ilex amelanchier</i>	sarvis holly	D S A
<i>Alnus maritima</i>	seaside alder	D S A
<i>Carya laciniosa</i>	shellbark hickory	D C A
<i>Cornus amomum</i>	silky dogwood	D S O
<i>Salix sericea</i>	silky willow	D S A
<i>Acer saccharinum</i>	silver maple	D S O
<i>Pinus elliottii</i>	slash pine	E N
<i>Viburnum obovatum</i>	small-leaf arrowwood	D S O
<i>Ilex laevigata</i>	smooth winterberry	D S A
<i>Morella caroliniensis</i>	Southern bayberry	E S A
<i>Sambucus simpsonii</i>	Southern elder	D C O
<i>Viburnum nudum</i>	Southern possumhaw	D S O
<i>Pinus glabra</i>	spruce pine	E N
<i>Cornus foemina</i>	stiff dogwood	D S O
<i>Celtis laevigata</i>	sugarberry	D S A

Figure 3: List of native wetland tree species sorted alphabetically by common name, including scientific name, and select foliage characteristics. (continued)

scientific name	common name	foliage
		attributes
<i>Viburnum recogitnum</i>	Southern arrowwood	D S O
<i>Quercus michauxii</i>	swamp chestnut oak	D S A
<i>Populus heterophylla</i>	swamp cottonwood	D S A
<i>Forestiera acuminata</i>	swamp-privet	D S O
<i>Cyrilla racemiflora</i>	swamp titi	P/E S A
<i>Quercus bicolor</i>	swamp white oak	D S A
<i>Nyssa biflora</i>	swamp tupelo	D S A
<i>Quercus similis</i>	swamp post oak	D S A
<i>Quercus laurifolia</i>	swamp laurel oak	P/E S A
<i>Persea palustris</i>	swamp-bay	E S A
<i>Magnolia virginiana</i>	sweetbay	P/E S A
<i>Sideroxylon tenax</i>	tough bumelia	E S A
<i>Cornus asperifolia</i>	toughleaf dogwood	D S O
<i>Carya aquatica</i>	water hickory	D C A
<i>Gleditsia aquatica</i>	water locust	D C A
<i>Nyssa aquatica</i>	water tupelo	D S A
<i>Quercus phellos</i>	willow oak	D S A
<i>Ilex verticillata</i>	winterberry	D S A
<i>Illicium parviflorum</i>	yellow anisetree	E S A

