

Deer and Rabbit-Resistant Plants

Most of us find out the hard way that hungry deer and rabbits will eat almost any vegetation within their reach. However, you can make your garden a little less inviting by including plants they dislike and forgoing those they prefer. In general, deer and rabbits avoid plants with a sticky, rough or fuzzy texture, and plants with spiny protection like cacti and American holly. They also turn up their noses at plants with fragrant leaves.

Below is a list of some deer and rabbit-resistant plants. Native species are marked with an asterisk (*), and plant groups containing native species are marked with a cross (+). Some of these plants are invasive and therefore should be kept out of gardens bordering natural areas. See TRCA's Naturescaping fact sheet and Invasive Plant List for more information on native and non-native species.

Perennials

anemone*	delphinium	nodding wild onion
beebalm*	foxglove ⁺	Ohio goldenrod*
black-eyed Susan*	golden Alexander*	peony
blanket flower	hellebore	prairie dropseed*
blazingstar*	hollyhock	rosemary
bleeding heart	Icelandic poppy	salvia
butterflyweed*	lady's mantle	stiff goldenrod*
catmint	lamb's ear	spearmint
chive	lavender	tansy
chrysanthemum	lavender hyssop*	tiger lily
columbine*	lemon thyme	wild quinine*
coreopsis*	little bluestem*	yarrow
daffodil	monkshood	

Annuals

alyssum	geranium	nicotiana
calendula	grape hyacinth	salvia
cleome	impatiens	snapdragon
cornflower	lobelia	sweet pea
cosmos	marigold	zinnia
dahlia	morning glory	
dianthus		

Shrubs

alder⁺
American holly
common boxwood
cotoneaster
flowering dogwood
forsythia

hawthorn⁺
honeysuckle
juniper⁺
lilac
nannyberry*
potentilla gracilis*

roses⁺
smoke bush
snowberry*
spirea⁺

Trees

ash⁺
birch⁺
hackberry*
hazel⁺

eastern hemlock*
honey locust
larch⁺
oak⁺

redbud*
spruce⁺

Deer and Rabbit Delicacies

Although hungry deer and rabbits eat almost any vegetation within reach, some plants – including the ones listed below – are definite favourites. Avoid these plants or use them as lures to protect more treasured plants.

apple
azalea
cedar
cardinal flower
cherry
coneflower
cranesbill geranium
crocus
chrysanthemum

daylily
English ivy
iris
hemlock
hollyhock
hosta
impatien
meadow rue
pansy

phlox
rhododendron
sedum
spindle tree
sunflower
tulip
wood hyacinth
yew

Additional Information

Careful plant selection is an excellent way to reduce deer and rabbit problems in your garden. If however, these and other critters are still causing an unacceptable amount of damage in your garden, visit the Web sites listed below for advice on non-toxic repellents, physical barriers and more.

Canadian Wildlife Federation – Wild about Gardening
www.wildaboutgardening.org/en/attracting/section6/index.htm

Critter Repellent.com
www.critter-repellent.com/rabbit/rabbit-control.php?source=Overture