

# Treeways

April 2012

Spring is coming. We can feel it in the air and see it when we go to work in the daylight instead of the winter darkness. Last year you devoted considerable time to crushing the invasive buckthorn and honeysuckle scum that had taken over your woodland. Oh my goodness – now we can see our neighbors and they can see us – do we need to put up curtains for privacy like when we lived in Edina?

When a void is created in a woodland due to a gigantic tree crashing down or the removal of a thicket of invasive buckthorn and honeysuckle **mother nature senses an opportunity for new growth**. In Sunfish Lake that usually means more buckthorn, honeysuckle, garlic mustard, or burdock; none of them desirable, all aggressive competitors, and all manageable. Re-establishing well-adapted native species is the first line of defense to manage these new open spaces. Native species have evolved to do well in our climate and locale and will need less care than many exotics once they are established. Reintroducing natives will increase the numbers of native butterflies, birds and other animals because native plant species support many times the number of butterfly and bird species compared to exotics like buckthorn and honeysuckle. Read Douglas Tallamy's book, [Bringing Nature Home](#), for more reasons to go native.

Planting bare root plants in the spring is the most economical way to successfully introduce large enough numbers of woody natives to be effective. It is very important to understand that winning the woodland revegetation struggle will pay long-term benefits only if consistent effort is applied over time. This means controlling the invasive species while the new natives become established and protecting them from destruction by voles, rabbits, and deer. Extra watering will be necessary. Here are some natives to consider to replace buckthorn and honeysuckle: hazelnut, redbud, dogwood, gray dogwood, pagoda dogwood, arrowwood viburnum, nannyberry viburnum, highbush cranberry, ironwood, sugar maple, chokeberry, chokecherry, American wild plum, hawthorn, serviceberry, Juneberry, smooth sumac, staghorn sumac, elderberry, downy serviceberry, false indigo, prairie rose, and pussy willow.

Also consider these native trees: bur oak, red oak, white oak, northern pin oak, bicolor oak, American chestnut, basswood, American elm (disease resistant), American sycamore, American beech, hickory, river birch, sugar maple, silver maple, red maple, Kentucky coffeetree, red pine, white pine, jack pine, eastern red cedar, and tamarack. There are also some well-behaved non-natives that could be considered and that is another story. Many of these could be available for purchase at the Arbor Day Green Festival if you order early – watch for details.

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