

About Ottawa Riverkeeper

Ottawa Riverkeeper (*Sentinelles de la rivière des Outaouais*) is a citizen-based action group that brings people together to protect and promote the ecological health and diversity of the Ottawa River and its tributaries. Expert and independent, our organization advocates for responsible decision-making, public education, participation, access to information, and compliance with protective regulations, for the benefit of our river and our communities. <http://www.ottawariverkeeper.ca>

Ottawa Riverkeeper (*Sentinelles de la rivière des Outaouais*) is a licensed member of *Waterkeeper Alliance*, an international grass roots advocacy organization, founded by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. <http://www.waterkeeper.org>



Agency of the Government of Ontario
L'organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



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SHORELINE NATURALIZATION

A no-nonsense guide to 'doing your part' for the health and future of the Ottawa River watershed, brought to you by Ottawa Riverkeeper.

www.ottawariverkeeper.ca

Defending the Ottawa River, Protecting our Communities.

Naturalizing your shoreline is easier than it sounds.

Here is a list of native shoreline species to help get you started:

Having a naturally vegetated shoreline is one of the most effective ways you can help to maintain the health of the lakes, creeks and rivers in the Ottawa River watershed.

Partial shade to shaded areas



Sunlit to partially shaded



Fully exposed to sun



Low water requirement (intermediate to dry)



Medium water requirement (moist to intermediate)



High water requirement (wet to moist)



A. SHRUBS (LOW GROWING WOODY PLANTS)

1 Red-Osier Dogwood

(*Cornus stolonifera*)

- Spring flowers
- Plant tolerates erosion and flooding
- Size: 1.5-4 m



2 Highbush Cranberry

(*Viburnum trilobum*)

- Produces white flowers and red or orange berries that are edible.
- Blooms May-July
- Size: 2-4m



3 Buttonbush

(*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

- Ornate white flowers bloom June-September
- Grows in all soil types.
- Size: up to 4m



4 Black Chokeberry

(*Aronia melanocarpa*)

- Produces white flowers and black berries
- Size: 1-3m



5 Sweet Gale

(*Myrica gale*)

- Tolerates erosion and flooding
- Leaves emit an aromatic odor
- Size: 0.5-1.5 m



6 Bush Honeysuckle

(*Diervilla lonicera*)

- Various colored flowers: red, orange and yellow
- Flowers bloom June or early July
- Size: 0.3-1.0 m



7 Pussy Willow

(*Salix discolor*)

- Tolerance of compaction with respect to surrounding plants
- Tolerates erosion and flooding
- Preferred by beavers
- Size: 2-8 m



8 Common Elderberry

(*Sambucus canadensis*)

- Produces large white flowers in the summer and black fruits in the fall
- Size: 2-4 m



9 Meadow sweet

(*Spiraea alba*)

- Produces white flowers with pink-red tint
- Can grow in difficult conditions
- Size: 1-1.25 m



10 Ninebark

(*Physocarpus opulifolius*)

- Purple leaves and white flowers
- Size: 2-3 m



11 Virginia Creeper

(*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)

- Vine type
- Produces blue berries
- Red leaves in the fall



12 Blackberry

(*Rubus allegheniensis*)

- White flowers, edible berries
- Size: 2-3 m



B. HERBACEOUS PLANTS (NON-WOODY PLANTS)

13 Blue Flag Iris

(*Iris versicolor*)

- Perennial
- Blue flowers
- bloom May-July
- Size: 0.5m



14 Purplestem Aster

(*Aster puniceus*)

- Attracts butterflies
- Produces blue flowers near end of summer
- Size: 0.5-1.25 m



C. TREES

15 Silver Maple

(*Acer saccharinum*)

- Fast growth
- Size: 20-30 m



16 White Birch

(*Betula papyrifera*)

- Fast growth
- Bark has tendency to peel
- Size: 6-30 m



17 Nannyberry

(*Viburnum lentago*)

- Produces white flowers and red berries
- Blooms July-September
- Size: 4-7 m



18 Tamarack

(*Larix laricina*)

- Needles turn yellow and are shed in the fall
- Size: 15-25 m



19 Black Willow

(*Salix nigra*)

- Fast growth
- Size: 3-30 m



20 Eastern White Cedar

(*Thuja occidentalis*)

- Fragrant evergreen
- Size: up to 20 m



21 White Spruce

(*Picea glauca*)

- Evergreen
- Size: 20-30 m



Credit: Miramichi Salmon Association

Got beavers?

Avoid planting willows, birch and maples in favour of evergreens such as pine, hemlock and spruce. Protect the trees you do have by wrapping the bases with wire fencing.

How to plant native species along your shoreline:

- It's best to do your planting in the spring or fall.
- Check the instructions on your seed or plant and make sure they match the soil conditions and sun and water availability at your chosen planting site.
- Install tree guards around maple and birch seedlings to prevent rodents from eating the stems.
- Keep the grass and weeds around your new plants cut while they establish so that they get enough light.
- Try to plant vegetation in a staggered formation rather than in a straight line.
- Trees should be planted 4-6 m apart.
- Low shrubs and bushes are great alternatives to trees if you're concerned about blocking your river view. They should be planted 1 m apart.

Need assistance with your shoreline?

There are local initiatives within the Ottawa River watershed in both Ontario and Quebec that can help by providing free/ discounted native shoreline plants, workshops, and/or onsite consultations and expert advice.

To find the initiatives in your area, consult your nearest:

- 1) Conservation Authority (Ontario) - www.conservation-ontario.on.ca/
- 2) Organismes de bassin versant (Quebec) - www.robvq.qc.ca/obv
- 3) Municipality
- 4) Ottawa Riverkeeper - 1-888-9KEEPER or info@ottawariverkeeper.ca

We can help connect you with other initiatives and resources you need!

Some tips to consider when purchasing plants for your shoreline:

Buy native.

Native plants require less maintenance and care and have fewer pest problems. For a list of native plant nurseries in Quebec and Ontario visit: findnativeplants.com/canada/

Buy local.

Locally grown plants are adapted to the Ottawa River watershed's climate and will have the greatest success. It also supports local businesses in your region. Ask your local nursery if they sell local plants, if not, ask if they will order local plants for you.

Buy organic.

Ask your nursery if their plants and seeds have been sprayed with insecticides. Insecticides harm the diversity of species that use the shoreline.

Visualizing your shoreline into the future!

Now that you know what to do, get your hands in the soil and do your part to protect the Ottawa River watershed. With a little bit of patience and time you will watch your shoreline transform into a beautiful natural buffer that provides wildlife habitat, shoreline stabilization, and water quality protection.

Before



After



Photos courtesy of Tennessee Valley Authority

Thank you for doing your part to protect our invaluable water resources!