

Spiraea tomentosa

Steeplebush

Tried and True
Native Plant Selections
for the Mid-Atlantic



This lovely resident of wet prairies, meadows, and marshes has multi-season interest with pink blooms, yellow fall foliage, and interesting bark. The tiny flowers on its spire-like flower plumes resemble those of invasive Japanese Spiraea, for which it is a good native* substitute.

Shrub	Plant in Landscape, Flowers, Leaves	
Height: 2–4 feet		
Spread: 3–5 feet		
Bloom Color: Pink		
Characteristics		
Mound-shaped deciduous shrub with erect, wand-like stems and exfoliating reddish bark		
Elliptic to ovate, coarsely-toothed, green leaves with woolly hairs on undersides; yellow fall color		
Dense, 4–8 inch, terminal plumes of tiny pink to rose-purple flowers from July to September		
Small brown ovoid seed follicles September to March		
Spreads by suckers to form colonies		
Attributes		
Tolerates erosion and light shade		
No serious pests or diseases		
Deer seldom severely damage		
Medicinal use by Native Americans		
Bees, flies, and beetles seek abundant pollen; larval host for Spring/Summer Azure butterfly and some moth species		
Growing and Maintenance Tips	Excellent Replacement for	
Soil Requirements: Moderately acidic	<i>Spiraea japonica</i> - Japanese Spiraea	
Light Requirements: Sun, Partial Shade		
Water Requirements: Moist, Wet		
Deadhead to encourage additional blooming		
Prune in late winter to early spring, if needed	<p>*In the Mid-Atlantic Region, it is rare in the Piedmont and common in the Coastal Plain in DE. It is native to MD and concentrated in the eastern and western parts of PA. It is frequent to locally common in the Coastal Plain, rare in the Piedmont, and infrequent to locally common in the mountains in VA. It is not native to NoVA or DC.</p>	
Use in rain gardens, pond edges, or as a hedge		
Hardiness: USDA Zones 3–8		
developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria		

Images by Elaine Mills, North Carolina Arboretum