

**Alternatives to Boxwood: *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa', *B. sempervirens* and *B. microphylla***

The introduction of boxwood blight (caused by the fungal pathogen *Calonectria pseudonaviculata*, also listed as *Cylindrocladium pseudonaviculata* or *C. buxicola*) to the Long Island landscape has prompted the need for alternative planting options that serve a similar function. Selections are grouped in order of greatest similarity to boxwood form, texture, and function in the landscape and are broad-leaved evergreens unless noted otherwise<sup>1</sup>.

Group	Scientific name	Common name	Suggested cultivars	Mature size (height x width)	Growth rate	Form	Salt-spray tolerance <sup>2</sup>	Deer resistant? <sup>3</sup>	Notes
Group 1: Similar in foliage, growth habit and landscape use	<i>Euonymus japonicus</i>	Japanese Euonymus	'Green Spire'	6' x 6-8'	medium to fast	columnar fastigiate	moderate	no	Susceptible to crown gall, anthracnose, leaf spots, scales.
	<i>Euonymus kiautschovicus</i>	"Manhattan" Euonymus	'Manhattan'	8' x 12'	fast	rounded, spreading	moderate	no	leaf spot, crown gall; scale
	<i>Ilex crenata</i>	Japanese holly	'Beehive', 'Helleri', 'Sky Pencil', 'Soft Touch', 'Steeds' + more!	varies	very slow to slow	densely mounded or fastigiate	low	no	Thielaviopsis root rot, spider mites.
	<i>Ilex glabra</i>	Inkberry holly	'Compacta' & 'Shamrock'	4-5' x 5-6'	slow	upright, mounded	high	may browse	Susceptible to leaf spot & Thielaviopsis root rot. Occasional scale or leafminer.
	<i>Lonicera nitida</i>	Boxleaf honeysuckle	'Baggesen's Gold' & 'Lemon Beauty'	4' x 6' & 3' x 3'	fast	spreading, arching stems	not documented	may browse	Golden or variegated foliage.
	<i>Lonicera pileata</i>	Privet honeysuckle	'Hohenkrammer'	2' x 8'	fast	spreading, arching stems	not documented	may browse	Not common in trade.
Group 2: Differ in texture and form, but similar landscape function	<i>Cephalotaxus harringtonia</i>	Japanese plum yew	'Duke Gardens' & 'Fastigiata'	2-3' x 3-4' & 10' x 6-8'	slow	spreading or upright/columnar	low	yes	Yew-like, needled evergreen.
	<i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i>	Dwarf Hinoki falsecypress	'Nana'	3' x 5' or so	very slow	compact, somewhat rounded	moderate	no	Scale-like evergreen foliage. Prefers sheltered, sunny locations.
	<i>Nandina domestica</i>	Heavenly bamboo	'Wood's Dwarf'	2-2.5' x same	medium	compact, mounded to spreading stems	low	no	Lovely, red winter foliage; powdery mildew may be a problem.
	<i>Osmanthus heterophyllus</i>	False holly	'Rotundifolius'	4-5' x same	slow	dense, rounded dwarf	moderate	most of the time	Small, ovate green leaves.
	<i>Thujaopsis dolobrata</i>	Hiba Arborvitae	'Nana'	3-4' x 4-6'	slow	dwarf, rounded form	not documented	may browse	Scale-like evergreen foliage with striking white streaks on lower sides.
Group 3: Similar landscape function, but may differ in form. All have additional features such as flowers.	<i>Abelia x grandiflora</i>	Glossy Abelia	'Little Richard', 'Rose Creek', & 'Sherwoodii'	2-3.5' x 3-4'	medium to fast	dense, rounded growth	low	most of the time	Lovely white flowers in spring; susceptible to leaf spots, mildew, & root rots. Deciduous to semi-evergreen
	<i>Gardenia jasminoides</i>	Gardenia	'Doublemint', 'Klem's Hardy', & 'Pinwheel'	3' x 3'	medium	mounded	low	may browse	Prune to maintain dense foliage. Dark green leaves. Susceptible to many pests and diseases. Marginally hardy to zone 7b.
	<i>Kalmia latifolia</i>	Mountain laurel	'Minuet', 'Little Linda', & 'Elf'	3' x 3'	very slow	dwarf	very low; avoid exposure	no	Prune to maintain dense habit. Scales occasionally; susceptible to many leaf spots & Phytophthora root rot. Avoid exposed sites.
	<i>Pieris japonica</i> var. <i>yakushimanum</i>	Cavatine Pieris	'Cavatine', 'Prelude', & 'Sarabande'	3' x 3'	very slow	upright, rounded habit for dwarf cultivars	very low; avoid exposure	yes	Leaf spots, Phytophthora, lace bug, wax scale, spider mites, and more. Avoid exposed sites.
	<i>Rhododendron</i> sp.	Azalea	Gumpo Pink', 'Gumpo White', & 'Kaempo'	3' x 3'	slow	upright, slow-growing dwarf	very low; avoid exposure	no	Large flowers cover the shrub in late spring.
	<i>Skimmia japonica</i>	Japanese Skimmia	straight species commonly used	3' x 4'	slow	dense, rounded	moderate	most of the time	Early spring blooming followed with red berries on female plants only. Avoid exposed sites. Prefers rich, moist soils in protected shade.
	<i>Viburnum obovatum</i>	Small-leaf Viburnum or Walter's Viburnum	'Reifer's Dwarf'	4' x 5'	slow	compact, mounded	low	no	Red winter foliage; shears well

<sup>1</sup> This list is adapted from suggestions offered by Vincent A. Simeone (Director, Planting Fields Arboretum, Oyster Bay, NY), Atlantic Nurseries, Inc. (Dix Hills, NY) and the Boxwood Blight Advisory Group (comprised of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County educators and horticultural professionals who have volunteered their time to advise the Nursery and Landscape Program).

<sup>2</sup> Salt-spray tolerance information was compiled from various Cooperative Extension Bulletins, professional horticultural journals, and personal field observations

<sup>3</sup> Deer resistance ratings are from Rutgers Cooperative Extension Bulletin E271: Landscape Plants Rated by Deer Resistance and Dr. Mark Bridgen's trials (Cornell University Long Island Horticultural & Research Extension Center)