

PLANT THIS, NOT THAT!

Alternatives to overused landscape plants

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Thousands of natives and non-natives can be put into garden to replace boring, common landscaping plants. Here are unique, exciting alternatives to plants that have become all too common in our landscapes:



DWARF CUBAN GOLD DURANTA . . . NOT BOXWOOD

L to r, Duranta repens; Buxus microphylla (boxwood)

Texas native duranta is a full to part-sun shrub that can replace overused boxwoods. An extremely heat and humidity tolerant, well-branched plant with chartreuse, near evergreen, foliage. Occasional blue flowers late summer to early autumn are followed by beautiful, golden berries. This dwarf variety will reach 2-3 feet tall and wide and can be hedged just like a boxwood.



CAMELLIA . . . NOT LOROPETALUM

L to r: Camellia sasanqua 'Kanjiro', Loropetalum chinense 'Burgundy'

Camellia sasanqua is a highly ornamental, evergreen shrub that typically grows 3-12 feet tall with dark-green, shiny foliage. Blooming in autumn and early winter, their flowers are born in profusion and easily become a focal point in a garden. There are many different varieties available, so you can pick the color, size, and look that is perfect for your landscape.



DWARF BOTTLEBRUSH . . . NOT INDIAN HAWTHORN

L to r: Callistemon citrinus 'Little John', Rhapsiolepis indica

The dwarf bottlebrush has a versatile, compact size with dense branches covered in blue-green, evergreen foliage. Bright-red blooms cover this shrub for an extended season. Plant this 3-foot tall shrub in full sun!



YESTERDAY, TODAY & TOMORROW . . . NOT AZALEAS

L to r: Brunfelsia pauciflora , azalea

This profuse, fragrant spring bloomer lives up to its name by opening deep-violet and gradually fading to white over three days. A semi-evergreen shrub for dappled sun borders or a mass for a privacy screen. Reaches 3-8 feet tall and 4-6 feet wide, but can easily be pruned to fit smaller beds.



HERCULES CLUB . . . NOT CRAPE MYRTLE

L to r: Zanthoxylum clava-herculis, Lagerstroemia indica 'Miami'

Texas native hercules club bears large clusters of yellow-green flowers in the spring. Birds love the shiny, red to black seeds that follow the flowers. Don't be scared of its unique, spiny bark. It is also a host plant for the giant swallowtail butterfly.



BUTTERFLY GINGERS . . . NOT CANNAS

L to r: Hedychium coronarium 'Maximum', Canna

A wonderful, back-of-the-border substitute! The pure-white, butterfly-shaped blossoms appear in clusters from late spring well into autumn. The extraordinary scent is the most fragrant of all gingers! It grows effortlessly in any garden soil, and can even thrive submerged in a pond or boggy area.



BANANA SHRUB . . . NOT LIGUSTRUM

L to r: Michelia fuscata, Ligustrum japonicum

Creamy-yellow blooms have a strong banana fragrance! A compact, densely-branched shrub with narrow, glossy, evergreen foliage perfect for full to part-sun. It can reach 8-10 feet tall and wide, but is easy to train.



AGARITO . . . NOT HOLLY

L to r: Berberis trifoliolata, Ilex

This drought tolerant shrub has beautiful, gray-green foliage with a texture similar to holly bushes, but also has clusters of fragrant, showy, yellow flowers in early spring. Bright-red, edible berries make delicious jelly!



VIRGINIA SWEETSPIRE . . NOT NANDINA

L to r: Itea virginica , nandina

This Texas native has scented, pure-white, four-inch flowers in the early summer. The summer foliage changes to a brilliant multitude of oranges and reds in autumn, similar to a nandina. It matures at less than 3-feet tall, making it suitable for mass plantings or a mixed border. It attracts butterflies and birds!