

Deer Browse Preference of Plant Species Found Within MCMP

This document does not represent the entire catalog of flora found within Mill Creek MetroParks but is meant to highlight native species and their invasive counterparts that are found within MetroParks properties and the relative deer browse preference for that species.

In general, MetroParks properties are experiencing very little regeneration of native deciduous or coniferous tree species. Additionally, where present, the suite of understory shrubs are dominated primarily by unpalatable invasive species or deer-resistant natives such as common privet, glossy buckthorn, Japanese barberry, ironwood, or hawthorn. The same could be said for wildflowers and forbs, with unpalatable invasive species or deer-resistant natives such as common teasel, Canada thistle, daffodils, wingstem, Virginia bluebell, Christmas fern, or jack-in-the-pulpit being among the species most observed.

Distinct browse lines, a lack of forest regeneration (even in non-preferred species), and the dominance of unpalatable or deer-resistant shrubs and forbs all suggest that the forest ecosystems of Mill Creek MetroParks are being shaped by the heavy browse pressure of white-tailed deer, resulting in decreased biodiversity and habitat degradation.

Deciduous Tree Species	Category	Browse Preference
Northern Red Oak	Native	High
White Oak	Native	High
Swamp White Oak	Native	High
Sugar Maple	Native	High
White Ash	Native	High
Red Maple	Native	Moderate
Pin Oak	Native	Moderate
Black Walnut	Native	Moderate
Tulip Poplar	Native	Moderate
Black Cherry	Native	Moderate
Bitternut Hickory	Native	Moderate
Hawthorn	Native	Moderate
Norway Maple	Invasive	Moderate
Shagbark Hickory	Native	Low
American Hornbeam	Native	Low
American Sycamore	Native	Low

American Beech	Native	Low
Slippery Elm	Native	Low
Tree of Heaven	Invasive	Low

Evergreen Tree Species	Category	Browse Preference
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White Pine	Native	High
Eastern Hemlock	Native	High

Shrub Species	Category	Browse Preference
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Canada Yew* (Potentially Threatened)	Native	High
Black Chokeberry	Native	High
Dogwood spp.	Native	High
Greenbrier	Native	High
Multiflora Rose	Invasive	High
American Elderberry	Native	Moderate
Honeysuckle spp.	Invasive	Moderate
Autumn Olive	Invasive	Moderate
Buttonbush	Native	Low
Spicebush	Native	Low
Common Chokecherry	Native	Low
Ninebark	Native	Low
American Holly	Native	Low
Common Privet	Invasive	Low
Glossy Buckthorn	Invasive	Low
Japanese Barberry	Invasive	Low

Wildflower/Forb Species	Category	Browse Preference
Large White Trillium	Native	High
Red Trillium	Native	High
American Cancer Root	Native	High
Jacob's Ladder	Native	High
False Solomon's Seal	Native	High
Canada Mayflower	Native	High
Goldenseal	Native	High
Cut Leaved Toothwort	Native	High
Virginia Bluebell	Native	Low
Daffodils	Introduced	Low
Dutchman's Breeches	Native	Low
Jack-in-the-Pulpit	Native	Low
Mayapple	Native	Low
Christmas Fern	Native	Low
Blue Phlox	Native	Low
Wingstem	Native	Low
Common Milkweed	Native	Low
Purple Coneflower	Native	Low
Tall Ironweed	Native	Low
Wild Leek	Native	Low
Garlic Mustard	Invasive	Low
Skunk Cabbage	Native	Low
Black-eyed Susan	Native	Low
Woodland Sunflower	Native	Low
Common Teasel	Invasive	Low
Canada Thistle	Invasive	Low
Cardinal Flower	Native	Low