

# Spiraea tomentosa

## Steeplebush, Hardhack

Tried and True  
Native Plant Selections  
for the Mid-Atlantic



This lovely resident of wet prairies, meadows, and marshes has lovely tiny, pink flowers on its spire-like plumes that resemble those of invasive Japanese Spiraea, for which it is a good native\* substitute. Its epithet refers to the tomentose hairs on abaxial leaves and young stems.

Shrub	Shrub, Flowers and Foliage, Fruit
Height: 2–4 feet	
Spread: 3–5 feet	
Bloom Color: Pink	
<b>Characteristics</b>	
Mound-shaped <a href="#">deciduous</a> shrub with erect <a href="#">stems</a>	 
<a href="#">Alternate</a> , <a href="#">elliptic to ovate</a> , coarsely-toothed, green leaves densely <a href="#">tomentose</a> beneath; yellow fall color	
Dense, 4–8 inch, terminal <a href="#">panicles</a> of tiny, five- <a href="#">petaled</a> , pink to rose-purple flowers with <a href="#">exserted stamens</a> from July to September	
Small, brown, <a href="#">ovoid follicles</a> with short beaks September to March	
Spreads by <a href="#">suckers</a> to form colonies	
<b>Attributes</b>	
Tolerates erosion and light shade; no serious pests or diseases although may be susceptible to leaf spot and <a href="#">powdery mildew</a>	
<a href="#">Deer</a> seldom severely damage	
<a href="#">Ethnobotanic</a> /medicinal use by Native Americans	
Attracts bees, flies, butterflies, beetles; <a href="#">larval</a> host to ~63 <a href="#">lepidopterans</a> including the lo moth	
<b>Growing and Maintenance Tips</b>	<b>Excellent Replacement for</b>
<a href="#">Soil Requirements</a> : Moderately acidic	<a href="#">Buddleia davidii</a> - Butterfly Bush
<a href="#">Light Requirements</a> : Sun, Partial Shade	<a href="#">Spiraea japonica</a> - Japanese Spiraea
<a href="#">Water Requirements</a> : Moist, Wet	
Deadhead to encourage additional blooming	
Prune late winter to early spring, if necessary	*In the Mid-Atlantic Region, it is not <a href="#">native</a> to DC or NoVA. In DE, it is rare in the Piedmont and common in the Coastal Plain. It is found in MD's Coastal Plain and is present throughout PA. It is frequent to locally common in the Coastal Plain, rare in the Piedmont, and infrequent to locally common in the southwest and west central mountains in VA.
Use in rain gardens, pond edges, or as a hedge	
<a href="#">Hardiness</a> : USDA Zones 3a–8b	
<i>developed by Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia, serving Arlington and Alexandria</i>	

Images by Elaine Mills, North Carolina Arboretum and Glenstone, Maryland