

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

The introduction of boxwood blight (caused by the fungal pathogen *Cylindrocladium buxicola*, also listed as *C. pseudonaviculatum*, & *Calonectria pseudonaviculata*) 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 otherwise¹.

Group 1: Similar in foliage, growth habit and landscape use

Scientific name	Common name	Suggested cultivars	Mature size height x width	Growth rate	Form
<i>Euonymus japonicus</i>	Japanese Euonymus	'Green Spire'	6' x 6-8'	medium to fast	Columnar fastigate
<i>Euonymus kiautschovicus</i>	"Manhattan" Euonymus	'Manhattan'	8' x 12'	fast	rounded, spreading
<i>Ilex crenata</i>	Japanese holly	'Beehive', 'Helleri', 'Sky Pencil', 'Soft Touch', 'Steeds' + more!	varies	very slow to slow	densely mounded or fastigate
<i>Ilex glabra</i>	Inkberry holly	'Compacta' & 'Shamrock'	4-5' x 5-6'	slow	upright, mounded
<i>Lonicera nitida</i>	Boxleaf honeysuckle	'Baggesen's Gold' & 'Lemon Beauty'	4' x 6' & 3' x 3'	fast	spreading, arching stems
<i>Lonicera pileata</i>	Privet honeysuckle	'Hohenkammer'	2' x 8'	fast	spreading, arching stems

Group 2: Differ in texture and form, but similar landscape function

Scientific name	Common name	Suggested cultivars	Mature size height x width	Growth rate	Form
<i>Cephalotaxus harringtonia</i>	Japanese plum yew	'Duke Gardens' & 'Fastigiata'	2-3' x 3-4' & 10' x 6-8'	slow	spreading or upright/columnar
<i>Chamaecyparis obtusa</i>	Dwarf Hinoki falsecypress	'Nana'	3' x 5' or so	very slow	compact, somewhat rounded
<i>Nandina domestica</i>	Heavenly bamboo	'Wood's Dwarf'	2-2.5' x same	medium	compact, mounded to spreading stems
<i>Osmanthus heterophyllus</i>	False holly	'Rotundifolius'	4-5' x same	slow	dense, rounded dwarf
<i>Thujaopsis dolobrata</i>	Hiba Arborvitae	'Nana'	3-4' x 4-6'	slow	dwarf, rounded form

Group 3: Similar landscape function, but may differ in form. All have additional features such as flowers.

Scientific name	Common name	Suggested cultivars	Mature size height x width	Growth rate	Form
<i>Aebelia x grandiflora</i>	Glossy Abelia	'Little Richard', 'Rose Creek', & 'Sherwoodii'	2-3.5' x 3-4'	medium to fast	dense, rounded growth
<i>Gardenia jasminoides</i>	Gardenia	'Doublemint', 'Klem's Hardy', & 'Pinwheel'	3' x 3'	medium	mounded
<i>Kalmia latifolia</i>	Mountain laurel	'Minuet', 'Little Linda', & 'Elf'	3' x 3'	very slow	dwarf
<i>Pieris japonica</i> var. <i>yakushmanum</i>	Cavatine Pieris	'Cavatine', 'Prelude', & 'Sarabande'	3' x 3'	very slow	upright, rounded habit for dwarf cultivars.
<i>Rhododendron</i> sp.	Azalea	Gumpo Pink', 'Gumpo White', & 'Kaempo'	3' x 3'	slow	Upright, slow-growing dwarf
<i>Skimmia japonica</i>	Japanese skimmia	straight species commonly used	3' x 4'	slow	dense, rounded
<i>Viburnum obovatum</i>	Small-leaf Viburnum or Walter's Viburnum	'Reifer's Dwarf'	4' x 5'	slow	compact, mounded

¹This list is adapted from suggestions offered by Vincent A. Simeone (Director, Planting Fields Arboretum, Oyster Bay, NY), Atlantic Nursery (Dix Hills, NY) and the Boxwood Blight Advisory Group (comprised of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County educators and horticultural professionals from Long Island, NY).