









# BRIGHT SPOTS

## CURRENT GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

August 19, 2019

+ Virginia Native Plant

<b>North Terrace - Containers</b>	<p><b>Elephant's Ear, <i>Colocasia 'Elepaio'</i></b>, is a variegated green and white cultivar, originating in Hawaii and named for the flycatcher bird. The genus has large shield shaped leaves that easily explain the common name. <i>Colocasia</i> are tropical, but are members of the Arum family, and thus related to our native Jack-in-the-pulpits. Usually planted for the dramatic effect of their leaves, one 'Elepaio' is sporting a bright yellow bloom that confirms this relationship.</p>	
<b>Four Seasons Garden, Triangle Beds, Planters and Throughout</b>	<p><b>Globe Amaranth, <i>Gomphrena 'Fireworks'</i></b>. This showstopper has tufts of long lasting, hot pink gumball flowers tipped with bright yellow atop very tall (3-4 ft.) stems. A vigorous, low maintenance annual, <i>Gomphrena</i> stands up to our heat and humidity until frost., It is tolerant of clay soils,( a boon to Richmond gardeners) and attractive to pollinators. Long lasting as a cut flower, it's also highly valued in dried arrangements.</p>	
<b>Four Seasons Garden</b>	<p><b>Golden Lace, <i>Patrinia scabiosifolia</i></b>. Acquired in 2018, this plant began its second year in June with its nascent rise of 3-6 ft. thin stems balancing yellow inflorescent flowers. Come September, yellow seed heads develop and the foliage turns bronze. Loving our sun, heat and humidity, and enticing pollinators galore, this long-blooming Asian perennial is a boon to our August gardens, is low-maintenance, makes a lasting cut flower and even self-seeds.</p>	
<b>Conservatory - Ponds</b>	<p><b>Santa Cruz Water Lily, <i>Victoria cruziana</i></b>. Named for Queen Victoria, the huge floating leaves of this tropical water lily look like round trays with turned up edges. They can reach 4'-6' across. Note the thorns rimming the bottom edge (and underside). The pineapple-scented blooms attract the particular beetle that pollinates this lily. The night blooming flowers last only two nights, opening white the first night and pink the second. Visit early in the morning to catch ours open.</p>	

<b>Medicinal, Asian Valley, West Island, and Dot's Gardens</b>	<p>+<b>Beautyberry, <i>Callicarpa americana</i></b>. A native, deciduous shrub thrives in moist soil enriched with organic matter. Beautyberry grows in full sun or partial shade but will flower and fruit better with more sun. In late summer, the shrub's insignificant flowers give way to stunning fruits (drupes) that start out green and ripen to bright violet. The plants are best sited at the back of the bed and are said to bear more fruit when several are planted together.</p>	
<b>West Island Garden</b>	<p>+<b>Fringe Tree, <i>Chionanthus virginicus</i></b>, noted for its fragrant white blooms in spring, currently it commands a second look for its drupes of olive-like black berries dangling in clusters from delicate stems. The berries provide food for birds and other wildlife. The dried roots and bark were used as an anti-inflammatory by Native Americans. These small trees mature at 12-20 ft., ideal for a small garden.</p>	
<b>Flagler Garden – Joan Van Arnum Walk and Throughout</b>	<p><b>Japanese Thimbleweed or Japanese Anemone, <i>Anemone hupehensis</i></b>, is a native of the Chinese province Hupeh. Victorian plant hunter Robert Fortune introduced it to Europe in 1844. This perennial is anchored by a basal rosette of dark green leaves and has shallow saucer-like flowers in pink or white, single or double, that sway in the breeze at the end of long wiry stems. Plant in a protected location with soft shade and moist fertile soil.</p>	
<b>Grace Arents Garden</b>	<p>+ <b>Sweet or Yellow Buckeye, <i>Aesculus flava</i></b>. A large shade tree with good proportions, this native currently bears weighty fruit 2-3" round. Although poisonous (as are its flowers and leaves), the seeds inside were used by early colonists to make soap and also thought to bring good luck. The strong yet lightweight wood was crafted into cradles and artificial limbs. Now we appreciate the April yellow flower panicles and the yellow-to-orange autumn foliage.</p>	
<b>Cherry Tree Walk – Fence of Children's Garden</b>	<p>+<b>Purple Passionflower, <i>Passiflora incarnata</i></b>, is a native vine that develops exotic, complex, fragrant and symbolic purple flowers during summer. Butterflies, hummingbirds and bees share our fascination. Up your trellis and under your feet, this fast-growing plant also produces medicinal tea leaves and edible fruit. Maypop, as the fruit is called, "pops" when stepped upon in its green stage, but it is better saved until autumn brings maturity and sweetness.</p>	