

# BRIGHT SPOTS

## CURRENT GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

December 3, 2019

+ Virginia Native Plant

<p><b>North Terrace Garden, Asian Valley &amp; Throughout</b></p>	<p><b><i>Camellia sasanqua</i> cv.</b> This species of camellias blooms in the autumn. Differing from <i>C. japonica</i> that are starting to bloom now, these plants are shorter, have smaller serrated leaves and possess flowers that are more delicate in both their single and double forms. The shrub is drought tolerant, prefers rich soil in full-to-partial sun and can be used as a hedge or pruned to a tree-form. Now is the time to view the varied cultivars around the Garden.</p>	
<p><b>Four Seasons Garden, Main Garden Walk, West Island &amp; Cherry Tree Walk</b></p>	<p><b>+Winterberry, <i>Ilex verticillata</i> cv.</b> is a native deciduous shrub that produces a crop of brightly colored berries that will persist into winter (hence the common name) and provides food for our feathered friends. <i>Verticillata</i> is Latin for “whorled” and refers to the arrangement of the berries around the stems. ‘Winter Red’ is a female cultivar noted for its heavy fruiting; a male holly is required for pollination. Look also for <i>I. verticillata</i> ‘Winter Gold’</p>	
<p><b>Four Seasons Garden and White Garden</b></p>	<p><b>Variegated Tartarian Dogwood, <i>Cornus alba</i> ‘Elegantissima’</b> is not your grandmother’s dogwood. This deciduous shrub sheds its white edged leaves in Autumn to reveal brilliant red stems that brighten the landscape. Although pruning is not generally required, removing a few of the oldest stems will stimulate new growth and provide the richest, brightest winter color.</p>	
<p><b>Conservatory, Dome House &amp; West Wing</b></p>	<p><b>Elephant Ears, <i>Alocasia</i> spp.</b> Evergreen perennials in Zone 10-11, our <i>Alocasia</i> are grown in the Conservatory where conditions mimic their native tropics. The hybrid ‘Regal Shields’ is notable for its bold veins and emerging spathes. The quirky <i>A. macrorrhiza</i> ‘Stingray’ has a leaf shaped like a ray with fish-like wings and a long tail. These jungle understory plants are happiest in bright indirect light.</p>	

<p><b>Conservatory, Dome House</b></p>	<p><b>Papyrus, <i>Cyperus papyrus</i></b> makes an elegant display with delicate frothy umbells above spiky, hollow, triangular stems. This sedge can grow to 15’ in its native Africa; in early Egypt it was used to produce paper, as well as in boat making. Our specimens have spent the summer outside, but papyrus is a tropical, and needs winter protection here. It prefers rich, wet soil, and only requires wind for pollination.</p>	
<p><b>Conservatory, Dome House</b></p>	<p><b>Mistletoe Fig, <i>Ficus deltoidea</i></b> is native to SE Asia. It is the only <i>Ficus</i> species to produce fruit when grown indoors. Inedible, pea-sized fruit matures from green to red, in contrast to the dark shiny green leaves. The plant loves light and humidity and is a favorite of bonsai artists. Our specimen is about six years old and is planted in driftwood with companions of varying texture and color.</p>	
<p><b>Conservatory, East Wing</b></p>	<p><b>Bridal Bouquet, <i>Plumeria pudica</i></b>. The narrow trunk of this plant is topped by a wide bouquet of brilliant white flowers set off by dark fiddle-shaped leaves. leis are created with the sturdy flowers of this tropical (Z. 10-11) shrub in Hawaii. And we can grow <i>Plumeria</i> in summer containers, where it rapidly grows and blooms, without disease or insects, in sun and well-drained soil.</p>	
<p><b>Conservatory, East Wing</b></p>	<p><b>Slipper Orchid, <i>Paphiopedilum</i> ‘Petula’s Sensation’</b>. The Garden raises over 1200 orchids. The unique flower of <i>Paphiopedilum</i> sp. gives rise to its common name. Orchid flowers are designed to attract specific pollinators, using colors, patterns, shapes, and scents as lures. Many species make good houseplants with attention to potting media, light, humidity and watering schedule. No ice cubes, please!</p>	
<p><b>Main Garden Walk – Left side after Lotus Bridge</b></p>	<p><b>Atlas Cedar, <i>Cedrus libani subsp. Atlantica</i> ‘Glauca’</b> may live for 1,000 or more years. This ancient species is a true cedar that actually likes drought, heat and humidity as it grows 60-ft high. Large, upright cones (female) take 2 years to ripen and small (male) cones shed their pollen in the fall. This blue-silver conifer retains its lower branches</p>	