

BRIGHT SPOTS

CURRENT GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

April 19, 2021

+ Virginia Native Plant

*Location of Bright Spots Sign

<p>*George Bragdon, Asian Valley, Joan van Arnum Walk, Flagler Garden & Throughout</p>	<p>Rhododendron. Springtime in Virginia is defined by a profusion of azaleas (a subset of the genus <i>Rhododendron</i>). The stately cultivar ‘My Mary’ (photo) is rioting now in Bragdon. It is a deciduous azalea. <i>R. Quakeress</i>’ is a bicolor (pink & white) evergreen azalea currently blooming in the upper Asian Valley. In Flagler more than 80 other examples of this shade loving shrub are budding out. They all prefer rich humusy acidic soil.</p>	
<p>*Four Seasons Garden and Grace Arents Garden</p>	<p>Lady Banks Rose, <i>Rosa banksiae</i>, is a vigorous (some say aggressive) thornless climbing rose that blooms in spring with miniature, double yellow blooms. Named for the wife of Sir Joseph Banks, one of the founders of the Royal Horticulture Society UK, this rose received the Award of Garden Merit. Disease and pest resistant, Lady Banks looks lovely clambering over a wall or pergola. The largest single specimen in the US is in Tombstone, AZ and covers more than 8000 sq ft!</p>	
<p>*Four Seasons & Throughout</p>	<p>Spanish bluebells, <i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i>, not to be confused with our native ephemeral bluebells, are a member of the asparagus family. Coming into bloom now, these perennials sport familiar bell-shaped flowers in shades of blue, pink or white over strappy leaves. Throughout the garden they are amiable companions for ferns or other spring flowers and will naturalize in woodland settings with dappled shade and moist loamy soil.</p>	
<p>George Bragdon, Meditation Garden, Flagler, Dot's & *White Gardens</p>	<p>Bleeding heart, <i>Lamprocapnos spectabilis</i>, (formerly <i>Dicentra</i>) is an old garden favorite with sprays of dainty heart shaped flowers dangling from graceful arching stems. Modern cultivars in this group of woodland perennials have flowers that range in color from red to pink to white. <i>L. 'Alba'</i> has stark white hearts with bright green foliage. The plant goes dormant early in the summer so they are best planted through a loose ground cover or paired with later developing perennials.</p>	

<p>*Asian Valley & Throughout</p>	<p>Acer species. Asian maple trees have reached their spring peak. You will find every color, size and shape of tree, especially in the Asian Valley: the lime green Fullmoon maple, the small, red ‘Crimson Queen’ dissected maple, an orange-turning-to-green ‘Katsura’ are some of the offerings. The Garden offers double delight with the trees’ reflections in the lakes. The ease of care once established adds to this species attraction in home gardens.</p>	
<p>*West Island Garden</p>	<p>+Pitcher plant, <i>Sarracenia</i>. While the insect trapping pitchers may be more familiar, it’s the quirky flowers that are stealing the show right now. The blooms resemble little upside-down umbrellas on thin stalks. The flowers come first to allow bees and other small insects to do their pollinating work without peril. Many species are on the Federal endangered species list due to wetland degradation and illegal harvesting for the florist trade.</p>	
<p>Asian Valley, *Flagler Garden & Throughout</p>	<p>Viburnum. Our Garden Explorer database lists forty different specimens of viburnums. Some are shrubs, others multi-trunk small trees. Many are in bloom right now with flat top flower clusters (<i>V. plicatum</i> f. <i>tomentosum</i> ‘<i>Mariesii</i>’) or creamy white snowball shaped inflorescences, and some (<i>V. × carlcephalum</i>) are delectably fragrant. <i>V.</i> ‘<i>Eskimo</i>’ pictured here is semi evergreen in our range.</p>	
<p>*Flagler and Lucy Payne Minor Gardens</p>	<p>Lilac, <i>Syringa meyeri</i> ‘Palibin’ and <i>S. × ‘SMSXPM’ Scent and Sensibility™</i>. Both are dwarf species of the common deciduous lilac shrub. Their abundant panicles of flowers are pink & fragrant; the leaves are deer- and mildew-resistant; they develop no disease or insect issues; both attract butterflies and hummingbirds; and both set buds soon after the blooms fade (prune then!). The 1st won the RHS’ Award of Garden Merit and the 2nd re-blooms all summer.</p>	
<p>*Conservatory - West Wing</p>	<p>Easter lily cactus, <i>Echinopsis oxygona</i>, is native to southern Brazil and northern Argentina. Normally it is a quiet cluster of white ribbed, spiny green globes. The genus translates as <i>eichnos</i> – hedgehog or sea urchin – and <i>opsis</i> – appearance. This specimen is now bursting with bright yellow lily shaped flowers that last about 2 days each, borne on short stubby stems. The common name derives from its bloom time.</p>	