





# BRIGHT SPOTS





## CURRENT GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

May 17, 2021

### + Virginia Native Plant

### \*Location of Bright Spots Sign

<p><b>*Morton Native Plant Garden, Healing Garden, Flagler &amp; Throughout</b></p>	<p>+<b>Spiderwort, <i>Tradescantia</i></b>, is a shade loving native herbaceous perennial sporting lance-like foliage &amp; blue or purple three-petaled flowers with bright yellow stamens. Stem fluid is viscous, becoming thread-like upon hardening, resembling a spider's web and hence the common name. This honeybee magnet blooms through August. Happily, for local gardeners <i>Tradescantia</i> is deer resistant, can be grown under black walnut trees and is tolerant of clay soil.</p>	
<p><b>*Morton Native Plant Garden &amp; Throughout</b></p>	<p>+<b>Bluestar, <i>Amsonia</i></b>. All species of this native provide the springtime garden with a cloud of tiny powder blue star-shaped flowers atop tall, graceful stems with narrow lance-shaped leaves. <i>Amsonia</i> 'Blue Ice' (photo) is more compact than the typical species and its flowers are a deeper blue. While the plants have a milky sap that is not harmful to us, it may help to deter deer. The foliage turns golden in autumn, providing an additional season of interest.</p>	
<p><b>*Morton Native Plant Garden, Upper Fountain Gardens &amp; Throughout</b></p>	<p>+<b>Yarrow, <i>Achillea</i></b>. Native to North America, Europe, and Asia, yarrow honors Achilles who used the medicinal herb to heal wounds. 'Coronation Gold' produces flat clusters of "a thousand" yellow flowers from now until September. But check the Garden's numerous subfamilies and cultivars that would color a rainbow. (This red-blooming 'Paprika' is growing in the Morton Garden.) Perfect for Richmond, yarrow grows well in dry, lean soil, loves humidity, attracts butterflies, is fragrant and deters deer.</p>	
<p><b>Morton Native Plant Garden, *Four Seasons Garden &amp; Throughout</b></p>	<p>+<b>Beardtongue, <i>Penstemon</i></b>, is a garden star. This hardy plant (Zones 3-8) looks quite delicate with its tall stems of dainty pale flowers held above a mound of foliage. The maroon leaf color of some cultivars is an interesting pop amongst the greens of spring and summer borders. The blooms are good for cutting and they attract butterflies and hummingbirds. <i>P. digitalis</i> 'Husker Red' was named Plant of the Year in 1996 and is said to be deer resistant and drought tolerant.</p>	

<p><b>*Bragdon Memorial Garden, Asian Valley, West Island Garden</b></p>	<p>+<b>Serviceberry, <i>Amelanchier</i></b>, is native to North America. The delicate white flower clusters of April have given rise to a crop of tasty berries for our feathered friends or for humans. The fruit, seen here, resembles blueberries in shape, later color and taste. This small (15'-20') multi-trunked tree is also attractive in fall when the foliage turns to orange-red. It likes full sun to part shade and accepts a wide range of soils.</p>	
<p><b>Central Garden, *Asian Valley, Flagler Garden and Throughout</b></p>	<p><b>Peony, <i>Paeonia lactiflora</i></b>. The species name means “milk white flower” but this belies the range of colors (all shades of pink to crimson) available for this long-lived herbaceous perennial. Once the large, fluffy, fragrant blooms are finished, the lush greenery makes a nice background for lower growing summer annuals. Plant these close to the surface of the (preferably acid) soil for best bloom. They like sun, with perhaps some shade in the afternoon.</p>	
<p><b>*West Island Garden</b></p>	<p>+<b>Pitcher plant, <i>Sarracenia</i></b>. While the insect trapping pitchers may be more familiar, the quirky flowers are stealing the show right now. The flowers come first to allow bees and other pollinators to do their work without peril. <i>S. leucophylla</i> ‘Cronus’ Titan™ has brightly veined white pitchers but the blooms are a stunning deep red. Many species are on the Federal endangered list due to wetland degradation and illegal harvesting for the florist trade.</p>	
<p><b>*Asian Valley, Flagler Garden</b></p>	<p><b>Mother of thousands, <i>Saxifraga stolonifera</i></b>, goes by many common names but this one is especially fitting as its stolons spread this part shade groundcover plant around itself while keeping the “kids” close to home. During May, its tiny white flowers wave in cloudlike formations 18” above the lustrous heart-shaped, evergreen, white-veined green leaves. The wide swath along the path in the Asian Valley is a memorable sight.</p>	
<p><b>*Louise Cochrane Rose Garden</b></p>	<p><b>Shrub rose, <i>Rosa</i> ‘Meiggili’ Peach Drift®</b>, is a star in the Rose Garden right now. The low spreading habit makes it a good choice for small gardens or containers, glossy green foliage sets off the blooms that range from palest yellow to soft peach and orange. Add disease resistance and you get a trifecta!! The contrasting blue catmint (<i>Nepeta racemosa</i> ‘Walker’s Low’) is a perfect partner for our lovely roses.</p>	