

BRIGHT SPOTS

CURRENT GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

June 15, 2021

+ Virginia Native Plant

*Location of Bright Spots Sign

<p>Bragdon Garden, Upper Fountain Garden & Throughout</p>	<p>Daylily, <i>Hemerocallis</i>, from the Greek for daily (hemera) beauty (kallos): beautiful flowers each lasting a day. Once a food and medicinal source, we now love them for their range of color and tolerance of conditions. LGBG's Garden Explorer website lists 181 cultivars with height and color variations to suit every gardener. <i>H.</i> 'Grape Velvet' (photo) has deep purple flowers with a lime green throat. A heavy bloomer that will rebloom sporadically through the summer.</p>	
<p>Four Seasons, Flagler, Minor Gardens & Throughout</p>	<p>+Smooth hydrangea, <i>Hydrangea arborescens</i>, an Eastern US native, prefers a shady location with consistent moisture. Bloom occurs on new wood so these plants aren't damaged from a harsh winter, late frost, or spring pruning. Named cultivars in the garden include the pink tinted 'Nchai' Invincibelle® Spirit (Flagler), white mop head 'Annabelle' (Minor) and the lacecap flowered 'Haas' Halo' (Four Seasons), pictured here in early morning.</p>	
<p>Bragdon and Upper Fountain Gardens & Throughout</p>	<p>Stokes' aster, <i>Stokesia laevis</i>, a native of the southeast, grows in wetlands and prefers moist sandy soils. Note that the garden specimens are flourishing in a variety of locations. It blooms from late spring through the summer and the flowers are in the lavender blue range with fringed petals. Dead head to encourage reblooming. A great cut flower, lasting for about a week in a vase.</p>	
<p>Four Seasons Garden & Throughout</p>	<p>+Coneflower, <i>Echinacea</i>. The Garden hosts many species and hybrids of this native - favored by birds, bees and butterflies. The soft drooping ray florets come in many colors, usually with contrasting spiky cone seeds (echinos means sea urchin in Greek), making this easy-to-grow plant especially attractive during its 2 months of bloom. Roots and leaves were used as immunostimulants and medicinal cures by Native Americans, as they are today.</p>	

<p>Upper Fountain Garden, Cherry Tree Walk</p>	<p>+Rattlesnake master, <i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i> is a unique native member of the carrot family. Growing to 4' from a basal rosette, this perennial has tiny, white stemless flowers that are surrounded by pointed bracts resembling thistles. Its large root stores water for use in hot dry weather. Indigenous people found value in the fibrous sword shaped leaves which they used for weaving sandals and baskets.</p>	
<p>Upper Fountain Garden, Cherry Tree Walk</p>	<p>Wandflower, whirling butterfly or bee blossom, <i>Gaura lindheimeri</i>. Graceful stems of white or pink-tinged flowers wave above the lance-shaped leaves of this long-blooming perennial. Flowers are nectar rich, attracting bees, moths and butterflies. Support the stems by massing or intermingling with other plants, either in borders or containers. Hardy in Zones 5-9, these wildflowers need full sun and well-drained soils.</p>	
<p>Lucy Payne Minor Garden, Main Garden Walk & Throughout</p>	<p>Hydrangea, <i>Hydrangea serrata</i>. These sturdy shrubs, smaller and more compact than the related species <i>H. macrophylla</i>, are good choices near a patio or in a container. Selections like 'Bluebird' in Lucy Payne Minor (photo) have flat, domed flower heads with tiny fertile florets in the center (magnet for bees) and larger, sterile, showier florets around the edges. The pink 'Preziosa' on Main Garden Walk is a full flowered mop head selection.</p>	
<p>Four Seasons Garden, Flagler Garden and Cherry Tree Walk</p>	<p>Bear's breeches, <i>Acanthus</i>, a dramatic perennial native to dry sites in the Mediterranean, forms mounds of deeply scalloped green leaves. The deer resistant clumps are topped with tall spikes of white flowers peeking from deep purple "hoods" (bracts). In Greek mythology, Acantha was a nymph who resisted Apollo's advances and was turned into a plant as punishment. The leaf shape inspired the Corinthian capital design on classical columns.</p>	
<p>Throughout</p>	<p>Bigleaf hydrangea, <i>Hydrangea macrophylla</i>, is, with ample moisture, more tolerant of full sun than some other species. Soil pH affects flower color, which is blue in acidic soil or lavender to pink in more alkaline locations. Flowers form on old wood so pruning must be done immediately after flowering to avoid sacrificing next year's blooms. 'Nikko Blue' is an iconic standard (Flagler); 'Merritt's Supreme' is pictured here in Minor. This species can sport lacecap or mophead selections just like its smaller cousin, <i>H. serrata</i>.</p>	