

BRIGHT SPOTS

CURRENT GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

October 25, 2021

+ Virginia Native Plant

*Location of Bright Spots Sign

<p>Four-Seasons Garden</p>	<p>Bush ivy, × <i>Fatshedera lizei</i>, is an artificial hybrid made from crossing Japanese fatsia (<i>Fatsia japonica</i>), a shrub, with common ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>), a climbing vine. Shiny evergreen leaves are offset in the fall by greenish white sterile flowers that do not set fruit. The split personality of this shade tolerant plant makes it easy to train, either tied to a support and allowed to climb or left to sprawl on the ground as a groundcover. It can even make a great houseplant!</p>	
<p>Four-Seasons Garden</p>	<p>Jasmine, <i>Jasminum officinale</i> ‘Frojas’ Fiona Sunrise, needs a warm, sunny sheltered spot to perform well. Jasmines are best known for fragrant star-shaped flowers, which emerge in summer. However, the deciduous foliage of this twining shrub also offers changing garden color. In early spring the foliage is green with orange tinges, in summer it is chartreuse, and in fall it turns golden yellow. Use as a wall climber or border, especially in a wildlife garden. Frequent pruning is required to control growth.</p>	
<p>Bragdon Garden, West Island, Cherry Tree Walk</p>	<p>+Winterberry, <i>Ilex verticillata</i>, 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. Verticillata 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’ (photo).</p>	
<p>East & West Upper Fountain Gardens & Throughout</p>	<p>+Grasses. Previously, grasses were associated with lawns, pastures and cereal grains. Now, they are used to provide texture and interest to a garden almost year-round. In sun or rain, the nativar white muhly grass (<i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i> ‘White Cloud’), pictured here, is a firecracker of light as its puffs of long white inflorescences sway in the wind. Wait to cut back these warm season grasses until the spring and enjoy their plumes all winter.</p>	

<p>Conservatory Front Beds & Throughout</p>	<p>Aster. In Greek, aster means “star” and describes the blue flowers in this Asteraceae family, which are sun-loving, drought resistant sources of fall pollen. There are groups of asters throughout the Garden, but right now the most spectacular is this brilliant, large-flowered, intensely violet, fragrant and nativar <i>Symphotrichum oblongifolium</i> ‘Raydon’s Favorite’ that frames the Conservatory entrance. It blooms for 2 months and offers nectar to our favorite little ones.</p>	
<p>East Upper Fountain Garden</p>	<p>Cushion mum, hardy chrysanthemum, <i>Dendranthema</i> ‘Celo’s Pink’. In 1753, Linnaeus named these sturdy perennials from the Greek words chrysos (gold) and anthemon (flower). Unlike potted garden mums, these perennials return for another show every fall while giving pollinator-loving beauty in more colors than gold (photo) from October to frost. Cut the plant back by half in early summer & it will bloom on shorter stems that won’t flop over.</p>	
<p>Asian Valley, Grace Arents Garden</p>	<p>Japanese maples, <i>Acer palmatum</i>. One of the most prized landscape plants in the Garden, this species of maples is valued for the diversity of plant habit, leaf color and tree size. Miniature varieties of the trees are a popular choice for bonsai enthusiasts. The autumn leaves are brilliantly colored and some of these maples have distinctive and showy bark - extending their appeal of color and contrast to winter landscapes.</p>	
<p>Flagler Garden & Elsewhere</p>	<p>Katsura tree, <i>Cercidiphyllum aponicum</i>, native to Japan & China, combines a graceful branching structure with delicate bluish-green leaves that turn to peach and golden shades in autumn. Fallen leaves are said to give off a sweet aroma of cinnamon & caramel. The trees are dioecious; the inconspicuous flowers are red (males) or green (females). Mature height is about 60’. Katsura prefer rich, moist soils; avoid sites with hot afternoon sun.</p>	
<p>Asian Valley, Flagler, Lucy Payne Minor & Streb Conifer Gardens</p>	<p><i>Camellia sasanqua</i>. This species of camellias blooms in the autumn. Differing from the late winter blooming <i>C. japonica</i> these plants are shorter, have smaller, serrated leaves and more delicate blooms. Pictured here is ‘Setsugekka’ in the Minor Garden. The shrub is drought tolerant, likes full-to-partial sun in a rich soil 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>	