

BRIGHT SPOTS

CURRENT GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

May 23, 2022

+ Virginia Native Plant

*Location of Bright Spots Sign

Tis the season when the bright colors of a myriad of blooming perennials light up the garden paths. It is difficult to pick just 8 to highlight when, often, we could meet that number in just one garden. This guide will take you through most of the main garden areas and can be completed in about an hour at a leisurely pace. If you spot a favorite that we haven't listed be assured that the absence is due solely to publication limitations - not lack of appreciation. In addition to the blooms outdoors, you'll find an abundance of aloes, cacti, and orchids inside the Conservatory. During your visit, you will also encounter two special exhibits in the M&T Bank Pollinator Power summer experience - [David Rogers' Big Bugs](#) and [Butterflies LIVE!](#)



+ **Spiderwort, *Tradescantia***, is a shade loving native herbaceous perennial sporting lance-like foliage & three-petaled flowers in shades of white, blue or purple 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, tradescantia is deer resistant, can be grown under black walnut trees and is tolerant of clay soil. **Morton Native Plant Garden & throughout.**



+ **Beardtongue, *Penstemon***, is a garden star. This delicate-looking perennial with its tall stems of dainty pale flowers held above a mound of foliage, is actually hardy from zones 3 to 8. The maroon leaf color of some cultivars is an interesting pop amongst the typical greens of spring and summer borders. The blooms are good for cutting and they attract butterflies and hummingbirds. *P. digitalis* 'Husker's Red' was named Plant of the Year in 1996 and is said to be deer resistant and drought tolerant. **Throughout.**



+ **Pitcher plant, *Sarracenia***. Carnivorous plants, such as these, attract, digest and live off their insect prey. Bees and flies can't resist the colors and scents of the modified leaves ("pitchers") as they slip down the slick interior to their demise. Pitchers are seen on the left and flowers on the right. Wetland degradation and illegal harvesting have contributed to many of these species becoming listed as endangered or threatened under the [Endangered Species Act](#). ***West Island Garden.**





+ **Oakleaf hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia***, has long cone shaped panicles that emerge white and age to dusty rose. The plant also has excellent fall and winter interest with leaves that turn maroon and bark that exfoliates. Hydrangeas prefer moist, well-drained soil and part shade. In ***Flagler Garden**, you will find both the species (photo) and the double flowered cultivar 'Brido' Snowflake™ (across from **Bloemendaal House**). A pink tinted variety, 'Alice', will be found in **Lucy Payne Minor Garden**.



Rhododendrons are still in bloom in ***Flagler Garden** and other shady spots. The plants are established and large, with white, pink or raspberry flowers. The flowers bloom later than their sub-set azaleas and differ from them by being bell-shaped and growing in big clusters. While the plants and their leaves grow larger than azaleas, they also grow best in dappled shade, rich soil and with natural or applied mulch.



+ **Sweet bay magnolia, *Magnolia virginiana***. Unlike other magnolias, this native species tolerates swampy conditions while growing perfectly well in normal soil. Its small size (10' x 20' H&W) makes it excellent for a patio or lawn – perfect locations to appreciate the flowers' fragrance and cream beauty, the silvery undersides of the leaves, and the elegant, graceful shape of the tree. **Flagler Garden and Morton Native Plant Garden**.



Poppy, *Papaver*. Cheery red poppies welcome visitors to the ***Children's Garden**. Cup shaped flowers, delicate as crepe paper, have red petals marked by a dark blotch at the base. Poppies need winter dormancy and are intolerant of high humidity which can make them tricky to grow in southern climates. In the Victorian language of flowers, poppies meant consolation and are often worn to commemorate Veterans Day and those who died in service.



Rosa 'Meipeporia' Oso Easy Double Red® is, as its namesake, easy to grow. Known to be highly disease resistant, it has double red blooms with dark green foliage. It blooms from summer to fall and requires full sun. It was the 2020 Rose of the Year. The row of contrasting blue 'Walker's Low' catmint protects us from thorns as we enjoy the roses throughout the ***Louise Cochrane Rose Garden**.

