

BRIGHT SPOTS

A SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF CURRENT GARDEN HIGHLIGHTS

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**LEWIS
GINTER
BOTANICAL
GARDEN**

+ Virginia Native Plant

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It has been a relatively warm Autumn this year, although temperatures are dropping precipitously close to freezing this week. Leaving the foliage on perennials (e.g., peonies) as long as possible is recommended, as the leaves are gathering and storing energy in the roots below, to feed springtime blooms. If you need to shield tender plants Mother Nature has arranged for some protection by dropping a bounteous supply of red, yellow and brown leaves. No need to burn this bounty or bag it for the landfill; distribute the leaves under your shrubs, and over your garden beds. Shredding is not necessary, nor recommended. Leaf “litter” becomes a boon to your garden, winter cover for beneficial insects, and a gift to your aching back!



Mother Nature created the cultivar ‘Jane Platt’ when two species were brought together by pollinators

Coastal fothergilla, *Fothergilla gardenia*.

This showy shrub provides the full range of fall colors from deep purple, orange to gold and varies from year to year depending on the weather and available sunlight. Mixed with lingering green, the sight is stunning. Full sun is best for flowering and fall color. This plant is a cousin of witch hazel and is native to North Carolina and parts of the South. Named for British John Fothergill, who sought botanical remedies for ailments; possibly the plant’s beautiful leaves can relieve your sore muscles.



Bragdon Garden boasts 4 ‘Jane Platt’ cultivars and several other species abound through the Garden



Of the numerous oak leaf hydrangeas around the Garden, not all can put on an autumn show as well as ‘Sike’s Dwarf’

+Oakleaf hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*, is an impressive native shrub.

When most other deciduous plants have shed their leaves, the oakleaf hydrangea remains decked out in stunning deep red, purple and bronze foliage that lingers well into winter. Wildlife friendly, attracting butterflies, pollinators and birds, it supports biodiversity in the garden. Sun to part-shade, it thrives with minimal care and water once established; a great choice for sustainable gardening.



‘Sike’s Dwarf’ is located in the Bragdon Garden and complements the brick and stone wall behind it



Because the licorice flavor of the leaves resembles French tarragon ...

Mexican marigold, *Tagetes lucida*. From Mexico to Honduras, this native perennial plant produces brilliant yellow flowers featured in “Day of the Dead” celebrations and anise-scented leaves used to make teas and flavor Mexican foods, such as mole sauce. A great companion plant, it repels insects and mammals that munch on veggies. Plant in full sun with well-drained soils. Use it for herb gardens, borders, along pathways, and in pots. Attracts fall-migrating butterflies.



... another common name is Mexican tarragon. Enjoy!



Planted along Fountain Garden East, *C. sericea* 'Baileyi' will stay colorful all winter & if it snows ... wow!

+Red twig dogwood, *Cornus sericea*. Highly prized for its vibrant red stems and twigs, as well as its reddish-purple fall foliage, this deciduous shrub offers brilliant fall to winter interest in the garden. Cut stems for holiday arrangements or for season-long color indoors. Native to North America, the beautiful slender young red stems are used in basket weaving by Native American tribes. You can easily root late fall or early spring cuttings in moist soil.



The red stems make a vivid addition to a container & will grow roots by next year



A reblooming iris is a refreshing sight along Fountain Garden East

Intermediate bearded iris, *Iris* 'Constant Companion', is a cool season re-blooming iris, and blooms in spring, summer and again in the fall. Iris requires full sun, is drought tolerant, and deer and rabbit resistant. LGBG has recently been the recipient of 50 varieties of iris from the late Mike Lockett, breeder and horticulturist, with 8 of these his own introductions. The garden is honored to add these to our collection, many of them to be planted in the new expansion.



This intermediate bearded iris, *Iris* 'Constant Companion', is in the Streb Conifer Garden



Acer palmatum 'Viridis' is a bright spot upon entering Asian Valley via the moon gate

Japanese maples, *Acer palmatum*. After a warm welcome to autumn, the Asian Valley hillside has become a color show as the delicate Japanese maple foliage turns vivid red, yellow, purple, and orange. Easily incorporated into both large and small gardens, this species of maples is valued for its diversity of plant habit, leaf color, and tree size. Viewed as a symbol of serenity and tranquility, these maples' graceful beauty and rich colors add elegance and balance to the landscape.



We can't stop admiring the maples – this one is located along the original Garden entrance



This close-up photo of the un-named variety illustrates the rich color & complexity of the plant

Camellia is a broadleaf, evergreen, woody understory shrub, native to Asia. It was introduced into the US near Charleston, SC in 1789 and has been a garden favorite ever since. There are 2,000 recognized species of camellias and over the years, hybridizers have developed more than 20,000 varieties, chosen for diverse colors, extended bloom times, increased fragrance or to improve cold tolerance. As you stroll through the Garden, see if you can find all 74 specimens we have planted.



This un-named cultivar is located by the pond below the Tea House in Asian Valley



Where there's water in the Garden, you could see a cypress in its autumn splendor

+Bald cypress, swamp cypress, *Taxodium distichum*, is a large native conifer that is unique in that its needle-like leaves are deciduous & turn coppery-red, softly dropping in late fall. What's even more unusual is that "knees" pop up around the base. While theories abound about their purpose, their true function is unknown. From its common name, we know that this tree withstands water; its wood is rot-resistant & heavy, making it perfect for barrels and roof shingles.



Look down and you will see the "knees". Look up and you will spot the trees' many cones