

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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Welcome to the effects of climate change! Have you felt the whiplash of recent weather? Record breaking heat coupled with the worst drought since 1941...followed by flash flood warnings brought on by deluges of rain. Warm air holds more moisture which contributes to increased waterfall in storms. In response, the Garden has added more resilient plantings. Chrisman Sunrise Gardens outside the Conservatory and the Anne Cummings White Garden (formerly known as the Hillside Garden) are examples, Recaptured rainwater fills Lake Wick and is recycled through our irrigation network. At home, rain barrels manage stormwater; native plants are more adapted to our heat and humidity.



Young buds, stems, and leaves are harvested as wild greens and soup flavorings

Golden Lace, *Patrinia scabiosifolia*. Native to Eastern Asia, this perennial plant can survive intense summer heat and humidity as well as freezing winter temperatures (USDA Zones 5-8). The thin fragile stems (3-6') are topped with airy multi-branched flowers. *Patrinia* tolerates storms because the rain falls through, the stems have woven through neighboring plants to acquire structural support, and the roots are moisture tolerant while drainage occurs. **Four Seasons Garden**



Deer and rabbits avoid *Patrinia*, because bruised stems & flowers smell like rotting cheese



'Robert Fleming' is stunning against the purple blooms

+ Hardy hibiscus, Swamp rose mallow, *Hibiscus*. These summer blooms arrive in white, pink and red lasting only 1-2 days, but the plant keeps producing throughout the summer. Native to wet areas, hibiscus grow best in full sun. Okra and hibiscus are botanically related which is why both have striking and showy flowers. In traditional wellness practices, they are known for their high antioxidants, vitamins and fiber. **Throughout the Garden**



This native bloomer can be seen along the banks of Sydnor Lake



2018 Perennial Plant of the Year

Ornamental onion, *Allium* 'Millenium'. This hybrid onion bulb has umbrels of green-turning pink flowers held tall on individual scapes. A stunning, diminutive plant for the edge of the border, this onion is a well-behaved, clump-forming plant that won't spread or self-seed (if deadheaded). The slight onion fragrance deters deer and rabbits but won't keep away bees or butterflies. Great choice for flower arrangements! **Throughout the Garden**



Plant allium among your Spring tulip bulbs to keep the squirrels away



This plant ignores heat & drought, while posing as an architectural highlight in the garden

+Rattlesnake master, *Eryngium yuccifolium*, was made for Richmond's summer. The taproot can reach our water table as it grows over 8-ft deep. The leaves are leathery, resisting desiccation from wind and sun. They also are a reflective silver and quite fibrous, qualities that reduce water loss. This efficiency also is found in the florets – over 100 are packed together into balls that bees, flies, moths, and wasps (controlling aphids and stink bugs) can't resist. **Fountain Garden East**



The Xerces Society estimates that a single plant can produce 1,000's of flowers for pollinator



Prefers to be in moist soil and will tolerate wet soils.

Joe Pye Weed, *Eutrochium dubius* 'Little Joe', formally *Eupatorium* (classified with Bonesets) is a wonderful native perennial no garden should be without! 'Little Joe' is more compact and more drought tolerant than the straight species, making it more suitable for home gardens. The lavender flowers are valuable to a wide array of insects, bees and butterflies. Birds also use the plant as cover and consume the seeds in the late season. **Lower Asian Valley & Throughout**



These tall plants make a statement at the back of the border

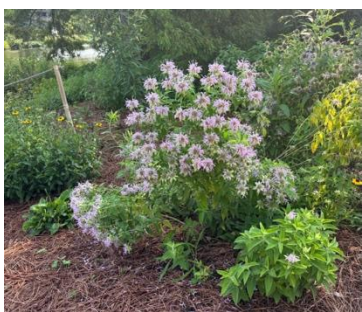


Bristly hair foliage is helping to make it deer resistant

Mohr's rosinweed, *Silphium mohrii* is a native wildflower found naturally in AL, TN and GA. The slightly fragrant, pale-yellow flower is attractive to bees and butterflies, and makes a statement in the garden, growing up to 5 feet tall. Adaptable to a wide range of climates as well as soil types, it is useful in pollinator gardens, low-maintenance gardens, and for erosion control. In fall, the seeds are enjoyed by finches and sparrows. **Anne Cummings White Garden**



Finches, sparrows and other birds enjoy the seed



Oregano-scented leaves prevent grazing by deer and rabbits

Eastern bee balm, *Monarda bradburiana*. Native to the Ozarks & Mississippi Valley, bee balm has been widely introduced and naturalized in the Mid-Atlantic states. This drought-tolerant plant has rhizomes and fibrous roots that make it useful for stabilizing soil and controlling water runoff; however, roots will suffer from heavy or prolonged rains. This species has genetic resistance to powdery mildew, which thrives in Virginia's hot humid conditions. **Cherry Tree Walk.**



Birds feed on the flower head and insects hibernate in the hollow stems



Little bluestem is a compliment to purple blooming flowers

+Little bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium* 'Smoke Signal' is a warm season bunch grass with feathery blue-green foliage that turns mahogany red in the fall, and the color persists over winter. Neither high heat/humidity nor drought conditions faze this ornamental grass. High value for wildlife, the clumps are larval hosts for butterflies, overwintering habitats for insects & birds; queen bumblebees nest at the base and birds eat the seeds. **Louise Cochrane Rose Garden**



Little bluestem is especially attractive planted in masses