



## *Winter Color in the Landscape*

When we think of fall, we think of all the different foliage colors, the leaves dropping, and unfortunately; we know winter is on the way. Selling a client on the benefits of fall planting can be difficult as you know. Do they really care that it is better to plant when the plant is going dormant so that it can enhance root growth during the winter and eliminate possible death from lack of water syndrome next summer? Why does a client want you to plant now when they can't get immediate gratification and see color in the landscape?

Well, you can get color into the winter with these under-used plants and prove to your clients that there is more to a landscape than the spring and summer blooming plants.

**Camellias** are one of the best looking broadleaf evergreen shrubs and relatively uncommon in our area.



Having both fall blooming and spring blooming varieties, flower color can range from red and pink to white. Fall Camellias have flowers from October into January, depending on the variety. And, then, come early March, the earliest blooming Camellia, Spring's Promise, starts showing its brilliant pink color, followed by the other spring blooming varieties.

**Cornus alba/sanguinea/sericea (Yellow Twig and Red Twig Dogwoods)** are excellent in the landscape and in containers for continued winter color. Best if the old wood is cut back yearly.



**alba 'Bud's Yellow'** has twigs that are bright yellow in the winter and reaches 6' tall.

**alba 'Elegantissima'** brings year round interest to the landscape but is especially beautiful in the winter when its stems turn bright red. In spring, the variegated leaves take over the show until fall.

**sanguinea 'Winter Flame's** has yellow fall color which is followed by amazing winter twig color. Yellow at the base of the plant, it flushes to orange-red at the outer edges. It looks like it is lit by fire all winter.

**sericea 'Bailey'** has excellent red fall foliage which defoliates to reddish-purple twigs in the winter.

**sericea 'Cardinal'** has stems that are a vivid cherry-red in winter.

**Corylopsis (Winterhazel)** – Tired of forsythia and King Alfred's daffodils? This is a late winter – early spring beauty in the landscape.

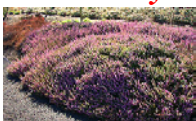


**Corylopsis pauciflora** has delicate lemon-yellow panicles in early spring, and then blooms give way to nearly-as-delicate rounded, veined & toothed hazel leaves that are strikingly beautiful from late spring through autumn. It reaches 4-6' tall.

**Corylopsis spicata** has pendulous 2-inch chains of lemon-yellow blooms that appear on the bare branches beginning in March, at the same time as forsythia.

Then new foliage will soon appear, unfurling a dark purple and maturing to a deep blue-green with lightly felted undersides on a 8-10' shrub. The fragrance is spicy and sweet, similar to that of witchhazel to which winterhazel is closely related.

**Erica x darleyensis (Heath)** – Looking for a plant that is evergreen, low-growing (1-2' by 2'), likes it dry, well-drained and blooms in the winter and early spring? Heath is a great alternative for an informal low hedge or perfect for a knot garden.



**Mediterranean Pink** has beautiful rosy-lavender flowers in late winter to early spring.

**Mediterranean White** has beautiful pure white flowers in late winter to early spring.

***Hamamelis virginiana and x intermedia (Witchhazel)*** – Fragrant, colorful, winter blooming, deer resistant



and a large shrub? Hamamelis is perfect for the landscape when you have a larger area that can use a large 15'-20' shrub. Place it near the house so the fragrance can intoxicate you in the fall or in late winter (based on variety) or outside the window where you can see the beautiful blooms when nothing else looks desirable outside.

*virginiana* '**Green Thumb**' is not only shade tolerant, it is also native. It has lots of fragrant yellow flowers in the late fall and is preceded by green leaves marked with yellow-green variegation.

*x intermedia* '**Angelly**' has light yellow fragrant flowers February through March with a compact habit.

*x intermedia* '**Arnold Promise**' has yellow fragrant flowers February through March.

*x intermedia* '**Barmstedt Gold**' has large golden yellow fragrant flowers February through March.

*x intermedia* '**Birgit**' is one of the darkest flowering, with dark purple fragrant flowers from January to March.

*x intermedia* '**Diane**' is a P.H.S. Gold Medal Plant and has orange-red fragrant flowers in the winter-spring and has yellow and orange fall foliage.

*x intermedia* '**Jelena**' has copper-orange fragrant flowers with yellow-orange fall foliage.

*x intermedia* '**Primavera**' has yellow fragrant flowers in February through March.

*x intermedia* '**Sunburst**' has lemon-yellow fragrant flowers in February through March.

*x intermedia* '**Wisley Supreme**' has bright yellow flowers in the winter-spring with beautiful bluish-green disease-free foliage

***Ilex verticillata (Winterberry)*** – If you or your client wants the true feel of the holidays, plant



winterberries. Winterberries are definitely a show stopper in the winter with the multitudes of berries on each stem from early fall to late winter. Remember, no hard pruning on these as the berries only form on old wood. Tall or short, red or gold, there is a variety for every landscape, but don't forget the male.

'**Jim Dandy**' is the pollinator for Afterglow, Maryland Beauty, Red Sprite and Stoplight.

'**Southern Gentleman**' is the pollinator for Winter Red and Winter Gold.

'**Afterglow**' is a compact plant reaching 6' tall with large orange-red fruit aging to bright orange.

'**Maryland Beauty**' colors up early in the fall with large red fruit that covers compact branches thickly on this 6' shrub. Often used for the commercially cut branches.

'**Red Sprite**', only reaching 5', is the most compact of the winterberries and never needs pruning. It has an abundance of large red berries all winter.

'**Stoplight**' reaches 8' tall and has large shiny red fruit on this taller compact plant.

'**Winter Gold**' has golden-yellow fruit well into the winter on this 8' shrub and is a P.H.S. Gold Medal Plant

'**Winter Red**', another P.H.S. Gold Medal Plant winner as brilliant red long lasting fruit all winter long on this 9' shrub.

Lastly, how can we forget about one of our perennial favorites in the landscape?

***Helleborus (Lenton Rose)*** – An extraordinary mix of colors (white, pink, red, spotted, and burgundy) and flower forms (singles, doubles and anemone forms) bloom in the winter well into the spring on this evergreen perennial.

