



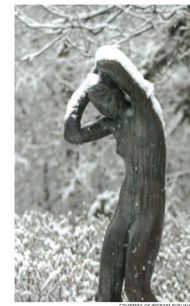
In the know



Landscapes to Love

With the right planning, gardens can be glorious every day of the year

BY MARY VINNEDGE



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EVEN IN WINTER, NEW JERSEY GARDENS CAN BE A JOY TO BEHOLD.

The winning formula combines careful selection of plants and other landscape elements with attention to placement. It's not just about what the plants need (such as sun, soil, water) and then what the humans want. "We often start with the view from the window over the kitchen sink because people spend a lot of time there," Dear says. "One key is to think beyond color; they advise. "We draw pleasure from textures and form that are interesting as well as from seasonal changes." Dear says. "We draw pleasure from the anticipation of the different seasons. Fragrance is always something to look forward to—from lilacs, for example."

Placement is key, too. First, you must consider what the plants need (such as sun, soil, water) and then what the humans want. "We often start with the view from the window over the kitchen sink because people spend a lot of time there," Dear says. "One key is to think beyond color; they advise. "We draw pleasure from textures and form that are interesting as well as from seasonal changes." Dear says. "We draw pleasure from the anticipation of the different seasons. Fragrance is always something

Opposite: The peeling bark and yellow leaves of river birch put on a brilliant fall show that contrasts with the mid-fall foliage of oakleaf hydrangea, yucca and the Virginia Creeper evergreen. At night, accent lighting enhances the ornamental value of river birch.

This page, top: In winter, man-made objects viewed from windows can enhance garden interest, including a snow-covered walkway and a bird feeder that attracts a blue jay.

This page, bottom: Landscape plants with spring blooms and red-to-purple berries in fall. • New Jersey's winter temperatures don't disrupt the blooms of hardy camellias. • Golden-berry holly stands out in a snowy landscape.



From left: When river birch loses its leaves, the exfoliating bark becomes a landscape star. • The texture and color of paperbark maple provide year-round interest. • Graceful Hakonechloa grass stands out next to leatherleaf mahonia (at right), with berries that follow its yellow blossoms. • Goldenrod serves as an easy-care ground cover along this Garden State driveway.

PLANTS FOR YEAR-ROUND INTEREST

PLANT	BEST FEATURES/WHEN	SPECIAL NOTES
TREES		
Korean Stewartia	white flowers with yellow center June to July; exfoliating tan/light gray bark	about 20 feet high and wide
Japanese snowbell	fragrant white blossoms late spring and early summer	20-30 feet tall and wide; keep soil constantly moist
Witch hazel	tassel-like golden blooms in fall or winter (depending on variety) last 3-4 weeks	10-15 foot tall tree
'China Snow' lilac	fragrant white blossoms in June; cinnamon-colored exfoliating bark	about 15 feet high and wide
Paperbark maple	exfoliating bark and red fall foliage	25 feet tall, 20 feet wide
River birch	exfoliating brown bark	30-40 feet tall, 20-30 feet wide
Hardy camellia	pink blossoms, typically in May	6 to 10 feet tall, 6 feet wide
Shiaw magnolia	wine-colored blossoms	10 feet tall, 6 feet wide
Star magnolia	fragrant white blossoms as early as mid-March	about 15 feet tall and wide
Crape myrtle	summer blossoms in red, pink, white, lavender; peeling bark; weeping; fall foliage can be red, bronzy yellow; elegant branching patterns	varieties can be small trees (25 feet), shrubs, and miniature shrubs; most labels; flowers fall so don't plant near paths
Golden globe	brilliant yellow foliage in fall	can reach 80 feet tall, 40 wide
Japanese maples	foliage ranges from orange yellow to chartreuse to deep burgundy; interesting branching patterns	varied sizes and forms
Schubert chokecherry	burgundy/red foliage in summer; pink flowers and showy fruit; attracts birds and butterflies	15-30 feet high and wide
Cornelian cherry dogwood	loaded with yellow flowers in March	12-15 feet high; use as a specimen tree
Amelanchier Canadensis	prominent white flowers in spring; red berries in fall	20-30 feet tall, 12-15 feet wide
Winter King hawthorn	white blossoms from late spring to early summer; gold-red-purple fall foliage; fruit in fall-winter	20-30 feet high and wide

PLANT	BEST FEATURES/WHEN	SPECIAL NOTES
SHRUBS		
Burning bush	brilliant red fall color	6-8 feet standard height or 4-6 feet dwarf; compact 2-4 feet
Harry Lauder's walking stick	curlicueing branches, 2-inch-long white flowers in winter	6-8 feet tall and wide; purchase non-suckering variety
'Firepower' nandina	rounded semi-evergreen shrub with brilliant red and gold fall and winter foliage	4-6 feet tall, 2 feet wide
Willowleaf cotoneaster	red berries in fall; reddish-purple winter foliage	many varieties and sizes; from 6 inches to 15 feet tall; great for back of border
Hollies	red berries in fall; most are evergreen	many sizes and spreads; some are trees
Oakleaf hydrangea	flower May into June; peeling bark; red fall foliage	5-7 feet tall, 4-6 feet wide
'Annabelle' hydrangea	white flowers, yellow/chartreuse foliage	4-6 feet high and wide
'Limelight' hydrangea	yellow-green blossoms for five months; flowers dry beautifully	6-8 feet tall, 6 feet wide
Heather	peach-purple flowers in winter	15-18 inches tall, 2-3 feet wide; likes humidity
Rosa rugosa	dark pink blossoms, showy red-orange hips	6-10 feet tall and 6 feet wide; wind-tolerant; thorns so don't grow near pathways
Double 'Knock Out' rose	pink blossoms all summer	2-3 feet tall and wide; pruned 2-3 times during growing season starting in April
Poukhanense azalea	lavender flowers mid-April; evergreen	2-3 feet tall and wide
Reo virginica	white flowers in spring; red foliage in fall	native to wetlands in South Jersey; 6 feet tall and wide
Fothergilla	honey-scented flowers in spring; foliage of red, orange and yellow—all on the same leaf—lasts until snow	3 to 5 feet tall; up to 5 feet wide



PLANTS FOR YEAR-ROUND INTEREST (cont.)

PLANT	BEST FEATURES/WHEN	SPECIAL NOTES
TREES		
'Nana' persimmon	fluffy, fuzzy blossoms in summer; plant dies to golden after hard freeze	12 inches tall; spacing 2-3 feet; leave blossoms on through winter
Hakonechloa	tuffs of yellow veined blades, almost white in sun	18 to 24 inches tall; 24-36 inches wide
Liriope	all-green or variegated foliage with fall flower spikes (usually lavender sometimes white); black berries through winter	typically about 1 foot tall and wide; cut to ground in early March
PERENNIALS		
'May Night' salvia	deep purple flower spikes in mid- to late spring that last two to three weeks; perennial	18 to 24 inches tall; 15-18 inches wide
Russian sage	lavender flower spikes from late spring to midsummer; perennial	2-3 feet tall and wide; leave in garden for silver color in winter
'Solar Cascade' goldenrod	a less-aggressive goldenrod with draping form; perennial	2 feet tall, 1-2 feet wide; dramatic ground cover
'Casan's brother' Shasta iris	mid-spring purple blooms; perennial	3 feet tall; space 18-24 inches
Shasta daisy	white with yellow center; perennial	various heights; spread of 18 to 24 inches
Aster	long-lasting plume-like red, pink, purple, white, salmon flowers in late spring; summer; perennial	1-5 feet tall, 1-2 feet wide; prefer shade; but can take sun with supplemental watering
'Autumn Joy' sedum	gray-green succulent foliage with deep-pink blossoms in late summer; early fall; perennial	2 feet tall and wide
Heibers	late winter to early spring blossoms in pink and white; perennial	1 to 2 feet tall, 6-12 inches wide depending on variety; poisonous
BULBS/ANNUALS/GROUND COVERS		
Daffodils	yellow and white blossoms in early to late spring; many are fragrant; perennial	various sizes; deer-resistant
'Andora Formosa'	green foliage in mid-spring; turning purple through winter; ground cover	18 inches tall, 6-8 feet wide
Serotti (petiolaris)	silver-daisy like bright pink flowers	15-18 inches tall, 12-18 wide; plant as cool-weather annual and replace with warm-season annual such as petunias



Opposite: The flowers of a Korean Stewartia tree bloom in the summer landscape. • The spring flowers of our magnolias are fragrant and showy. • Cornelian cherry dogwood shows off a bounty of golden flowers in early spring.

This page, top: 'Winter King' hawthorn and fields of daffodils go against green grass and evergreens in spring. The red fruit of 'Winter King' lasts into winter. • 'Limelight' hydrangea produces vivid-green flower clusters for five months.

This page, bottom: The delicate red leaves of Japanese maple call attention to themselves near ornamental grasses, green and a water feature. • Hakonechloa grass, broad-leaved hosta and bronze-tipped heuchera thrive in shade and part-sun gardens.

want it really fun, with nothing going on." Perhaps surprisingly, he says deciduous plants can provide interest even in winter. "You need to provide a frame—a backdrop of evergreens so the branching patterns of deciduous plants will stand out," Brophy says.

Todd has a different take: "In winter, your deciduous trees and shrubs drop their leaves and then evergreens like blue spruce stand out."

Bark that's colorful and textural, water features, ornamental grasses with dried seed heads, snow-covered sculptures, and hollyhocks and fuchsias placed so they're seen from indoors also amp up winter interest, Brophy and Todd say.

Lighting that accents shapes and textures can heighten interest throughout the year but is especially important during the long nights of winter.

Then in early spring, bulbs such as crocus and early-blooming narcissus (daffodils) and tulips will wake up the landscape with color. Bright panicles planted in tandem will peek up the bulbs' foliage once their blossoms fade. Later in the growing season, perennials will cycle into bloom, but usually for just a few weeks. "We have peckers in the landscape to stick in annuals for color longevity through all seasons," Todd says.

"A landscape should be like a symphony, like a program in which one thing removes and another comes on," Brophy says. Brophy, Todd and Dear suggest the plants in the accompanying tables as instruments to perform that symphony. ■

Mary Vinnedge, a regular contributor to Design NJ and its first editor, writes from her home in Texas.