

north carolina's
2011

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SHOWSTOPPER plants



Photo credit: Mark Weathington



Photo credit: John Vining

SHRUB: *CAMELLIA WINTER SERIES* (*Camellia* — pictured 'Winter's Charm')

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GROW CAMELLIAS BUT ARE AFRAID they can't tackle your cold winter weather? Well you are in luck if you choose varieties from the "winter series." Thanks to advancements in *Camellia* breeding by Dr. William Ackerman of the U.S. National Arboretum, *Camellias* are not out of the reach of gardeners in the mountains of North Carolina.

There are dozens of varieties that are considered part of the "winter series." The most popular of the cold hardy cultivars have the word "winter" in their names – 'Winter's Interlude', 'Winter's Star', 'Winter's Waterlily' and 'Winter's Charm' are a few. Others such as 'Pink Icicle' and 'Snow Flurry' are equally tough varieties.

These cherished Southern evergreen plants can now be enjoyed in gardens further west and north in Hardiness Zone 6. *Camellias* prefer partial shade and well drained, acid soil. Some cultivars will flower as early as October, while most bloom from November to January. Winter color when nothing else is in flower – wow, they have to be a showstopper!

Hardiness Zones: 6 to 9

SHRUB: *JAPANESE PLUM YEW* (*Cephalotaxus harringtonia* 'Prostrata')

SOUTHERN GARDENERS FOR YEARS HAVE DREAMED OF GROWING the common yew in their landscape. Unfortunately yews don't like our hot, humid summertime weather. If you are looking for an evergreen shrub with conifer-like foliage then look no further. The Japanese Plum Yew is the plant for you.

Plum yews make fine specimen plants and can also be used in groupings or in a mass planting. They tolerate a wide range of soils and need very little maintenance. Locate in shade or partial shade, even though well established plants will grow successfully in full sun. The only complaint that one will hear about Japanese Plum Yews is their slow growth rate.

The cultivar 'Prostrata' is a low-growing plum yew that reaches 2 to 3 feet tall and 3 feet in width. Many plant experts agree that the landscape potential for plum yews in the Southeast has not been tapped. Best of all, Japanese Plum Yews are deer resistant.

Hardiness Zones: 6 to 9

ASK FOR NORTH CAROLINA-GROWN PLANTS AT YOUR FAVORITE GARDEN CENTER.



The North Carolina Nursery & Landscape Association and North Carolina Cooperative Extension are pleased to announce our fourth year of Showstopper Plants. Nominated by North Carolina nurserymen and selected by North Carolina Cooperative Extension horticulture experts, the 2011 Showstopper Plants are "must have" plants for any Carolina garden. These featured plants are promising new cultivars or iron-clad plants that will thrive across the region. They are featured in Extension Gardener Learning Centers at home and garden shows throughout North Carolina.

SHRUB: *'VENUS' SWEETSHRUB*
(*Calycanthus 'Venus'*)



Photo credit: Tom Ranney

TREE: *KOUSA DOGWOOD*
(*Cornus kousa* — pictured 'Greensleeves')



Photo credit: Tom Ranney

VINE: *CLIMBING HYDRANGEA*
(*Hydrangea anomala petiolaris*)



Photo credit: JC Raulston Arboretum

PLANT BREEDERS AT N.C. STATE UNIVERSITY HAVE BEEN BUSY re-inventing our native sweetshrub. Thanks to Dr. Tom Ranney, a new white flowered hybrid – called 'Venus' Sweetshrub – is available for Carolina gardeners to enjoy.

Like our native deciduous sweetshrub, this plant will grow in sun or partial shade. Due to its hybrid vigor, 'Venus' needs room to grow and in moist soil it will reach a height and spread of 5 feet. It produces dozens of ivory-colored flower buds that open almost pure white.

Although sweetshrubs are not generally considered mainstream landscape plants, new hybrids like 'Venus' should become increasingly popular with gardeners. Use as a shrub border or as a plant in natural areas. Once you see it in flower you'll understand why it is a showstopper!

Hardiness Zones: 6 to 8



THE **KOUSA DOGWOOD** IS A HANDSOME SMALL- TO MEDIUM-sized tree reaching a mature height of 30 feet. Sometimes referred to as the Chinese Dogwood, this Asian cousin to our native flowering dogwood can be used as a specimen plant or in shrub borders.

Depending on the age of the Kousa Dogwood, the trees take on a different appearance. Young trees grow in an upright fashion and in somewhat of a conical shape. As a Kousa matures it develops more horizontal branching and becomes more wide-spreading. Our native dogwoods bloom in April while the Kousa Dogwoods flower nearly a month later. A tree for all seasons, the Kousa Dogwood has berries that resemble raspberry fruit in autumn, and the peeling bark on the mature tree trunks gives the bark an attractive mottled appearance.

A great addition to any Carolina landscape, grow in full sun or partial shade. The soil should be well-drained but moist. There are several named selections currently in the nursery trade, including 'Greensleeves', 'Satomi' and 'Blue Shadow.' Don't let this opportunity to transplant a real showstopper pass you by.

Hardiness Zones: 5 to 8



ARE YOU LOOKING FOR AN ORNAMENTAL VINE WITH YEAR-round interest? Look no further because the Climbing Hydrangea is the plant for you. The vine has rich green foliage, mid-summer white flowers and striking exfoliating bark in winter. This deciduous vine can't be seen in any season without making a visual statement.

According to Donald Wyman, respected American authority on woody plants, "there is no better climbing vine." Climbing Hydrangea is excellent for a massive effect on brick or concrete walls, arbors, gazebos or most any free-standing garden structure. This woody vine has an almost shrub-like appearance due to its lateral branches.

Climbing Hydrangea is somewhat slow to establish and it prefers rich, well drained, moist soil. It will grow in sun or shade and can easily grow 60 to 80 feet in its lifespan. Introduced in 1865 from Asia, this deciduous vine should find a home in most North Carolina landscapes. Once established it becomes carefree with no serious pest problems.

Hardiness Zones: 4 to 8