

MESSENGER-INQUIRER

	University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Cooperative Extension Service
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Different Shrubs Add Interest to the Landscape

Planting a diversity of plants in the landscape provides seasonal interest to the landscape. Think about the different characteristics and required growing conditions needed of the plants while selecting them for your landscape. Remember, the best time to plant most shrubs and trees is in the fall.

An early blooming shrub is Arnold Promise witchhazel, *Hamamelis X intermedia* 'Arnold Promise', which blooms in February. This shrub reaches 15 to 20 feet tall and spreads over 15 feet long. The cultivar Arnold Promise is one of the best yellow flowering witchhazels. The small, yellow flowers have thin, narrow petals which twist. When you see this plant blooming in February, it seems hard to believe your eyes. The fall leaf color is reddish-purple.

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier* species and hybrids) is a large shrub or small tree reaching 20 to 25 feet tall with a width of 10 to 20 feet. Serviceberry can be left as a large shrub or pruned into a tree. White blossoms cover the plant in early spring. The fruits are berrylike, orange-shaped, one-quarter inch in diameter, and change color from green to red to purplish-black when mature in June. Birds love them. The colorful fall foliage is red-orange to red-purple. The

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smooth, gray bark is attractive in winter. They can grow in full sun or moderate shade and prefer a well-drained soil.

Large fothergilla, *Fothergilla major*, 'Mt. Airy' is a multi-stemmed shrub reaching 5 to 6 feet tall and 4 to 5 feet wide. The white flower is 1.5 to 2 inches long and about 1 inch wide. It looks like a bottlebrush since there are no petals and the stamens are the showy part of the flower. The blooms open in April and last for about 2 to 3 weeks. They open a little ahead of the leaves emerging in the spring. Leaves are blue-green in color during the growing season. In the fall, leaves change to a yellow-orange color. It prefers moist, acidic soil and will grow in part shade. The plant will sucker and become wider. Remove the suckers to reduce the width of the plant as it grows older.

Buttonbush 'Moonlight', *Cephalanthus occidentalis* Magical® 'Moonlight', is a smaller cultivar compared to the native buttonbush. Even though it's smaller, this cultivar may reach 5 to 8 feet tall and 4 to 6 feet wide. The white flowers are fragrant and form a ball. The flowers of this plant attract hummingbirds, butterflies, and other pollinators in late spring. Birds love the fruits produced. It prefers to grow in full to part sun and wet soils but will adapt to a dry site.

Hydrangea 'Ruby Slippers', *Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Ruby Slippers', is a compact form of an oak leaf hydrangea. 'Ruby Slippers' grows 3 to 4 feet tall and 3 to 5 feet wide. The large 9-inch long, conical, upright flower panicles emerge in late spring with white sterile flowers. As the flowers mature, they turn pink quickly and mature to ruby red. The approximately 5-inch long, dark green leaves are deeply lobed. In the fall, the leaves turn mahogany red. In the winter, enjoy the pretty exfoliating bark on mature branches which reveals a brown inner bark.

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A nice cultivar of *Viburnum x burkwoodii* is Mohawk. The dark red flower buds add interest before opening with whitish-pink petals in the spring which have a spicy clove fragrance. Fall leaf color is orange-red. 'Mohawk' may reach 7 to 8 feet tall with a spread of 7 feet.

Koreanspice viburnum, *Viburnum carlesii*, is a large shrub with pleasantly fragrant flowers that open in April to early May. The flower buds are dark pink to red, but the flowers are white. The tube-shaped flowers are produced in rounded clusters 2 to 3 inches across. In the fall, the leaves turn a reddish color. The Koreanspice viburnum has a rounded shape and may reach from 5 to 8 feet tall and 4 to 8 feet wide.

Virginia sweetspire, *Itea virginica*, is a shrub 3 to 5 feet in height. In June and July, fragrant, white flowers are arranged on a spike-like stem to form a 2- to 6-inch-long flower cluster. The leaves are dark green in the summer and change to an outstanding show of reddish purple, scarlet, and crimson in the fall. Virginia sweetspire prefers soil that holds moisture. It can be planted in full sun or shade.

The common winterberry, *Ilex verticillata*, is a deciduous holly and has many bright red fruits that persist into winter. The slow to medium-growing shrub can reach 6 to 8 feet in height and width. Male flowers and female flowers are produced on different plants. To have berries, you need one male plant among several female plants. Several good cultivars of winterberry are available that have been selected for fruit size, fruit color, or fall leaf color.

For more information, contact the Daviess County Cooperative Extension Service at 270-685-8480 or annette.heisdorffer@uky.edu.

Annette's Tip:

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Don't forget to remove mummified fruits hanging on trees and vines as part of your sanitation practices in the garden and landscape. Practicing good sanitation slows down the development of diseases and insects for next year.

Upcoming Event:

“Native Plants, Why Do They Matter?” cosponsored by the Green River Area Extension Master Gardener Association will be presented by Jeff Nelson, President of the Kentucky Native Plant Society, on October 26 at 1:00 p.m. at the Daviss County Cooperative Extension Service Office.

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