

Boerner Through the Seasons

2011 Garden Walks with Melinda Myers

Sponsored by:

Winter Wonderland

1. **Weeping Katsuratree** – *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* ‘Pendulum’

The leaves emerge a purplish red, turn blue-green for summer and a beautiful yellow to apricot in the fall. Plus the leaves quake, much like a quaking aspen, in the wind. And as they age in fall they smell like cinnamon/brown sugar or burnt vanilla. Katsuratrees prefer full sun and rich moist soil. The weeping form grows to 25 feet tall. See an older specimen of the standard species in the peony garden. Hardy zones 4 to 8.

2. **Dwarf Austrian Pine** – *Pinus nigra* ‘Hornibrookiana’

A dwarf compact cultivar of the Austrian pine that, like many dwarf confers, was propagated from a witch’s broom. Hornibrookiana grows to about 2 feet tall by 6 feet wide. Prefers full sun - is heat and drought tolerant, but can suffer needle blight like the standard Austrian pine. Hardy zones 4 to 7

3. **Feather Reed Grass** – *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* ‘Karl Foerster’

The hardiness (zone 3), year-round interest and tolerance to a wide range of growing conditions gained this ornamental grass the title of 2002 Perennial Plant of the Year. A good grass for those new to ornamental grasses or dealing with less-than-ideal conditions for ornamental grasses. It grows 4 to 5 feet tall, has short-lived pink flowers that develop into buff seedheads that last through winter. *Calamagrostis brachytricha* grows 3-4 feet tall and blooms in September. Makes a nice companion to coneflowers. Hardy zones 3 to 8

4. **Angelina Sedum** – *Sedum repestre* ‘Angelina’

An evergreen sedum that performs best in full sun or light shade and well-drained to droughty soils. The intense color makes it a great accent plant, filler in containers, edger or groundcover when planted en masse. The yellow star shaped flowers appear in summer and the foliage often turns amber in fall. Hardy zones 3 to 9.

5. **Fireworks Goldenrod** – *Solidago rugosa* ‘Fireworks’

A must-have for fall interest, it’s also attractive in the winter garden. The goldenrods are great in the garden and in a flower vase. I had dried flowers last many years – until my daughter convinced me it was time for a change. Note the horizontal flower stems of Fireworks. Grow in full sun or part shade and well-drained soils. Grows 3 to 6 feet tall and wide and is hardy to zone 5. Many of the other goldenrods are hardy in zones 2 through 9.



6. Gateway Joe Pye Weed – *Eupatorium maculatum* ‘Gateway’

Gateway has mauve-pink flowers with reddish stems and is the smaller (5-6’ tall) cultivar of the bigger (5 to 7 feet tall) Joe Pye Weed. It grows best in full sun and moist soils and can scorch in extreme heat and drought. Good for rain gardens and hardy in zones 4 to 9.

7. Hameln Fountain Grass – *Pennisetum alopecuroides* ‘Hameln’

Dwarf fountain grass grows about 2’ tall and wide. Flowers form in late summer. This is one of the hardier of the perennial fountain grasses. Grow in full sun for best results. Prefers moist well-drained soil but will tolerate some drought once established. Hardy zones 5 to 9.

8. Prostrate Scotch Pine – *Pinus sylvestris* ‘Albyn Prostrata’

A low growing cultivar of Scotch pine. This vigorous spreader makes a nice groundcover and grows up to 3 feet tall and 5 feet wide. The blue-green needles and low maintenance requirement adds to its appeal. It also works as a facer (in front of taller shrubs), for mass planting and other areas where a low growing evergreen is needed. Hardy zones 3 to 7.

9. Maney Chinese Juniper – *Juniperus chinensis* ‘Maney’

One of the hardiest cultivars, Maney is a bushy upright juniper that tends to be as wide as it is tall. Grows 7 to 12 feet tall and wide with bluish needles and attractive blue berry-like cones. Good for full sun and well-drained soils. Drought tolerant once established. Hardy zones 4 to 7.

10. Spirea – *Spirea* spp.

Spireas are adaptable flowering shrubs that are used extensively in the landscape. The chestnut brown stems and seedheads make spirea a four-season plant. The Korean spirea (*Spiraea fritschiana*) has large dark green leaves, 1-3” white flowers, and is hardy in zone 4 (possibly 3) to 7.

11. Redosier or Redtwig Dogwood – *Cornus sericea*

The colorful red stems brighten the winter landscape. Prune older brown stems to the ground to encourage new colorful growth. Spring flowers, fruit the birds love and purplish-red fall color provide year round interest in the landscape. Grow in full sun to part shade and moist soil. Stem cankers develop in hot droughty conditions. ‘Cardinal’ is full sized (8 to 10’ tall and wider) with cherry red stems and fairly good resistance to leaf spot. ‘Isanti’ (west of the building) is a compact cultivar (5 to 6’ tall) with bright red stems. Hardy in zones 2 to 7.

12. Bird’s Nest Colorado Spruce – *Picea pungens* ‘Glauca Globosa’

Don’t confuse this with the more commonly grown Bird’s Nest Spruce (*Picea abies* ‘Nidiformis’). This dwarf globe shaped spruce is similar to the cultivar ‘Montgomery’, has blue needles and a flattened top. It eventually grows 3 to 5’ tall and 4-6’ wide. Performs best in full-sun and moist well-drained soils. Hardy zones 2 to 7.

13. Climbing Hydrangea – *Hydrangea anomala* subsp. *petiolaris*

This is one of the few vines that provide four-season interest in the shade. Check out the orange exfoliating bark, blooms (usually mid June) and yellow fall color. Be patient as these plants are slow to establish. It can take several years for the plants to reach a good size and flower. Provide a rough surface for the root-like holdfasts to attach. Hardy zones 4 to 7 (8).

14. Crabapple – *Malus*

Crabapples provide spring flowers, fall color, fruit for ornamental and bird appeal and interesting form in the landscape. Look for cultivars with good disease resistance, persistent fruit and the size and shape that will fit into your location. Hardy zones 2 to 9 depending on cultivar.

15. Oakleaf Hydrangea – *Hydrangea quercifolia* ‘Snow Queen’

A great four-season plant with interesting bark, white flowers in summer that turn pink as they fade and beautiful fall color and grows 4 to 6 feet tall and wide or wider. These plants tolerate shade and prefer moist well-drained soils. Mulch to keep roots cool and moist in full sun situations. Snow Queen has survived -22° F and has more and larger sterile (showy) florets and flowers that are more upright and less likely to flag. Hardy zones 5 – 9.

16. Emerald Spreader Yew – *Taxus cuspidata* ‘Monloo’ (unsheared)

Compact dense spreading Japanese yew that typically grows 2 1/2 ‘ tall and up to 9’ wide. The needle arrangement provides an interesting texture and this cultivar holds its color over winter. Leave yews unsheared for healthier plants and a more natural look. Japanese yews prefer full sun to part shade and moist well-drained soils. Protect from winter winds and sun. Hardy zones 4-7.

17. Douglasfir – *Pseudotsuga menziesii*

Once an important lumber producing tree, it is one of the best short needled Christmas trees and an outstanding landscape plant. Check out the unique cones with 3 pointed papery bracts. Looks like the back end of a mouse to me. Grow in full sun and moist well-drained soils. Hardy zones 4 to 6 (sometimes in 3 and 7).

18. Northwind Switchgrass – *Panicum virgatum* ‘Northwind’

This cultivar of our native switchgrass was selected by Roy Diblik of Northwind Perennial Farm in Burlington, WI. The stiff upright blue-green foliage of this cultivar will withstand lodging over winter. The species provides seeds for finches and will tolerate standing water. Hardy zones 4- 9.

19. Purple Moor Grass – *Molinia caerulea* ‘Dauerstrahl’

A nice see-through plant that is 3’ tall in bloom. Dauerstrahl has 12 to 18” tall foliage while airy flowers and seed heads rise above the leaves blowing in the breeze. The cool-season Molinia grasses tolerate heavy soils and prefer full sun. Voles may be a problem – just dig, divide and discard damaged portions in spring. Place in front of a dark evergreen or use as a see-through screen. Yellow fall color. Hardy zones 4-8

20. Alfredo American Cranberry Bush – *Viburnum trilobum* ‘Alfredo’

A denser more compact cultivar of our native American cranberrybush viburnum that grows 5 to 6’ tall. The species has white flowers in spring, dark green leaves changing to purple-red in fall, bright red edible (with lots of sugar in my opinion) fruit that persists in winter. Watch for viburnum borers in some parts of the country. Alfredo tends to have red fall color and less fruit. American cranberrybush viburnum is hardy in zones 2 to 7

21. **Fasciation** - The flattened stems on the bushclover (*Lespedeza*) is caused by a physiological disorder known as fasciation. This is a fancy way of saying abnormal growth that can occur in response to weather, insect feeding or for some unknown reason. The symptoms include flattened stems and a proliferation of buds. I often see this on lilies, asparagus, willows and some succulents. Plant breeder have used this occurrence to propagate and introduce interesting varieties like the fantail willow and crested forms of celosia.

22. **Goat's Beard** – *Aruncus dioicus*

Give this large plant (4 to 6' tall and wide) plenty of room in the shade garden. The male plants have showier flowers that do not reseed – unfortunately most nurseries do not separate by gender. Leaf spot can be a problem. *A. 'Kneiffi'* is 3' tall with finely cut foliage and *A. aethusifolius* is 6 to 8" mound with 12" white flowers and bronze fall color. Hardy zones 3 to 7.

23. **Jade Cascade Hosta** – *Hosta 'Jade Cascade'*

Hostas are great shade plants that perform best in part to full shade and moist soils. Summer flowers provide nectar for the hummingbirds and the seeds provide food for the juncos. Leave seedheads stand for winter interest. Jade Cascade has leaves that mound and cascade down, lavender flowers held high over the 20 to 24" mound of leaves. Hardy zones 4 to 9.

24. **Astilbe** – *Astilbe* spp.

Cultivars of this plant can be found from 8 – 48" in height and colors of white, pink, red, and lavender. Grow in full to part shade and moist organic soils. Great as a cut flower, fresh or dried. Can be slow to establish. Hardy zones 4 to 8.

25. **Japanese Kerria** – *Kerria japonica 'Golden Guinea'*

Here is a shade tolerant shrub with year round appeal. The bright green stems are dramatic in the winter and the yellow flowers brighten the spring garden. It can suffer some dieback in extremely cold (-20°) winters. Hardy zones 5 (somewhat 4) to 9.

26. **Boxwood** – *Buxus* spp.

Select hardy varieties (zone 4) that hold their green color such as Chicagoland Green, Green Gem, Green Ice, Green Mountain, Green Mound and Green Velvet for northern regions. Boxwoods are good evergreens for full sun as well as shady locations. Protect from winter winds and sun (avoid southern and western exposures) for best results. Hardiness varies with species and cultivar.

27. **Canadian Hemlock** – *Tsuga canadensis 'Gentsch White'*

One of the few shade tolerant evergreen conifers. Grow in full sun to shady locations sheltered from strong winds and free of droughty conditions. Prefers moist well-drained soils. Gentsch White typically grows 3 – 4' tall and wide (mine at home is already 6' tall). New growth is silvery white making the plant look snow covered. This is not the poisonous hemlock (that plant is herbaceous). Hardy zones 3 to 7.

28. **Rose** – *Rosa* spp.

Look for hardy repeat blooming shrub roses with large fruits (hips). The colorful fruit are edible, high in vitamin C and provide winter interest and food for the birds. Hardy roses need no winter protection so their ornamental appeal can be enjoyed year round. Roses perform best in full sun and well-drained soils. Most will tolerate dry soils once established. Hardiness varies with species.

29. Variegated Japanese Silver Grass – *Miscanthus sinensis* ‘Variegatus’

This variegated (white stripes on green leaves) *Miscanthus* is another favorite of the MN master gardeners and visitors to the MN landscape arboretum. Its red flowers appear late in the season and the foliage and seedheads provide interest in the winter garden. Hardy zones 4 to 9.

30. Magic Berry Snowberry – *Symphoricarpos x doorenbosii* ‘Magic Berry’

This hybrid has pink flowers in summer, dark green leaves and pink fruit that feed a variety of wildlife. Grow as an informal hedge or en masse. The plant prefers full sun to partial shade. The heavier the shade the more open the growth and fewer flowers and fruit. Hardy zones 3 – 7.

31. Leather Wood or Marginal Shield Fern – *Dryopteris marginalis*

An evergreen fern native from Nova Scotia to Minnesota and South to Alabama and Oklahoma. Grow these in a cool shady site protected from drying sun and winds. Fronds are clustered in a vase-like arrangement and grow to 24” tall. Hardy zones 3-8.

32. Ostrich Fern – *Matteuccia struthiopteris*

Grow in shade with moist soils. The leaves will scorch in dry conditions. Fiddleheads provide spring interest and unfold into 4 – 7’ tall fronds. Mix ostrich fern with spring flowering bulbs (fronds hide fading bulb foliage) and other shade tolerant plants. Spreads, here it is encroaching on the maidenhair ferns, so use it where this will be an attribute not a problem. Fertile (spore bearing) fronds are dark and compact providing winter interest. Hardy zones 4 to 7.

33. St. Johns Wort – *Hypericum kalamianum* ‘Gemo’

A cultivar of our native St John’s Wort, Gemo grows 30” tall by 3’ wide. The narrow leaves are topped by an abundance of bright yellow buttercup type flowers in summer. The persistent seedpods add interest to the winter garden. Grow in full sun to partial shade. It will tolerate dry to moist soil (no standing water) once established. Hardy zones 4 to 7.

34. Juniper – *Juniperus chinensis* ‘Hetzii Columnaris’

Junipers are great for hot dry environments and come in a variety of sizes and forms. This upright cultivar has blue-green scales and awls and can grow 10-15’ tall. The female plants produce lots of blue berry-like cones. Hardy zones 4 to 9.

35. Limelight Hydrangea – *Hydrangea paniculata* ‘Zwijnenburg’

There are lots of new panicle hydrangeas on the market these days. They can be grown as a multi-stemmed shrub or trained into small trees. This fast-growing versatile shrub is hardy in zones 3 to 8 (9 to 10 on the west coast) and depending on the cultivar can reach 10 to 20 feet in height and width. Dried flowers provide winter interest. Hardy zones 3 to 8 (9)

36. Isanti Dogwood – *Cornus sericea* ‘Isanti’

‘Isanti’ is a compact cultivar (5 to 6’ tall) with bright red stems. See #11 for more plant details

37. Dwarf Norway Spruce - *Picea abies* ‘Pumila’

A dwarf cultivar of Norway spruce, this slow grower has a round habit typically 3-4’ tall and 3-6’ wide. Grow in full to partial sun and moist well-drained soil. Hardy zones 2 to 8.

38. Goldtip Weeping Douglasfir – *Pseudotsuga menziesii* 'Pendula Aurea'
Weeping form of Douglasfir with yellow tips. See #17 for more plant details.

39. Long View of Ginkgoes & Oaks – *Ginkgo biloba* & *Quercus* spp.
Ginkgoes are medium to slow growing trees tolerant of urban conditions, free of pests, yellow fall color and interesting form. Select male clones to avoid smelly fruit. Oaks are also medium to slow growing trees that create a powerful presence in the landscape. Bark and form as well as wildlife attracting acorns and habitat make them a plus for larger landscapes.

40. Harry Lauder's Walking Stick – *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta'
You love or hate this plant. Many gardeners prefer it in the winter when the crinkled (wilted looking) leaves are absent and the twisted stems are in full view. The contorted growth is grafted onto a hardy rootstock so prune out straight stemmed suckers as soon as they appear. Cascading male catkins (flowers) add interest. It rarely fruits and usually grows 8-10' tall and wide. Hardy zones 4 – 8

41. Emerald Arborvitae – *Thuja occidentalis* 'Smaragd'
A narrow compact cultivar that usually grows 10-15' tall and 3-4' wide. Good heat and cold tolerance and the leaves stay emerald green throughout winter. Grow in full sun to light shade and moist well-drained soils. Avoid drying winter winds and snow loads (if multi-stemmed). Hardy in zones 3 -7.

42. Heliopsis – *Heliopsis helianthoides*
Grows best in full sun with moist well-drained soils. Tends to stretch and flop in shade and will tolerate (does not prefer) dry soils. Interesting seedheads for winter. Grows 3 to 5' tall x 2-3' wide. Hardy zones 3 to 9.

43. Yellow Giant Hyssop – *Agastache nepetoides*
This native perennial reaches heights of 4 to 7'. The flower spikes are 4 to 16" long and hold pale yellow flowers unfortunately not all in bloom at the same time. The long seedheads add interest in the winter garden. Grow in sun to partial shade with moist soils. Avoid dry sunny areas that can cause the foliage to wilt. This plant provides nectar for bees, flies and butterflies and the dense foliage attracts predatory insects like parasitic wasps, spiders, lady beetle and more. Hardy to zone 3

44. Sedum – *Sedum*
Sedums are great for full sun and well-drained to droughty sites. Some can tolerate a bit of shade. The variety of species in this group of plants allows you to use sedums as groundcovers, specimen, borders or more. The dried seedheads of many provide interest in the winter garden. Hardiness varies with species and cultivars.

45. Michigan Holly or Winterberry – *Ilex verticillata* 'Red Sprite' & 'Jim Dandy'
This deciduous holly grows in full to partial sun, prefers moist acid light or heavy soils. The species grows 6 to 9 feet tall and wide. You will need one male (Jim Dandy) for every 5 females (Red Sprite) for fruit formation. Some nurseries plant a male and female plant in the same pot to insure pollination, fertilization and fruit development. Red Sprite grows 3 to 6' tall, forms larger fruit. Hardy zones 3 to 9.

Conifer ID

Needles in bundles - pines

Individual Needles

Spruce – Needles usually stiff and angular - woody pulvinus – spruce boot at base

Firs – flat, often fragrant needles with circular leaf scar (suction cup-like attachment)

Hemlock – short needles, 2 white lines below, upward turned needles on stem

Douglas fir – needle somewhat like spruce and fir – pointy bud

Yews – flat needles, dark green above and yellow green below

Scales

Arborvitae (white cedar) – scales, fanlike appearance

Junipers - prickly, scales and awls

The American Conifer Society's Category Definitions

<i>Category</i>	<i>Yearly Growth</i>	<i>Size at 10 years</i>
Miniature	less than 1inch	1 foot
Dwarf	1 to 6 inches	1 to 6 feet
Intermediate	6 to 12 inches	6 to 15 feet
Large	more than 12 inches	More than 15 feet

***For more information on these and other plants,
visit the Ask Melinda database at www.melindamyers.com***



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