

Trees and Shrubs for Fall and Winter Bloom

28 Species Attractive to Pollinators and People West of the Cascades



Photo: J. Kehoe, CC BY 2.0

A yellow-faced bumblebee visits manzanita flowers.

N. Bell, H. Stoven and A. Melathopoulos

After autumn leaves drop, gardeners often “put the garden to bed” for the year. The garden *could* be forgotten until spring arrives again. However, bright spots in the garden can add visual interest and needed cheer at this time of year.

Winter is an opportunity to highlight structural aspects of the garden as well as provide habitat and food for wildlife at an otherwise lean time. One way gardeners achieve winter interest is by adding plants with colorful evergreen foliage or attractive bark. But we are fortunate in the maritime Pacific Northwest to be able to grow a number of plants and shrubs that brighten the garden with blooms and sweet fragrance during dark winter months.

Most trees and shrubs go dormant in fall and save their blooms for spring or summer. However, some begin blooming in fall or winter. Cooler winter weather will often extend bloom time, with some displays lasting a month or longer. The area west of the Cascade Mountains generally has mild enough winters to grow a wide range of winter-blooming shrubs. Most days stay above freezing, even in midwinter. Although cold spells can kill some floral buds and damage flowers that are open, new blooms often emerge soon after the cold weather ends, returning the plant to glory.

The plants in this publication are hardy enough

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to grow in the open garden in most locations west of the Cascades, but consider the various microclimates in your garden before planting. Microclimates are areas which can differ in climate in comparison to the surrounding area. These differences can be caused by vegetation, elevation, bodies of water, aspect (the direction an area faces) or slope. Microclimates can make a difference even for small properties. For example, plants placed next to homes or buildings are more likely to resist damage during a cold spell. The added heat from buildings can also change the timing of blooms.

When deciding where to plant late-fall- and winter-blooming shrubs, consider their location in relation to windows or doorways. This way, you can see their flowers while gazing out or while coming and going. Many winter-blooming shrubs are fragrant, so place these plants where you can enjoy the perfume.

Flowering shrubs also boost pollinators, providing nectar and pollen when little is available. Anna's hummingbirds are year-round residents in western Oregon. They feed on nectar when they can find it but also supplement their diet with insects. Winter-blooming plants can provide them needed carbohydrates.

Flowering shrubs also boost pollinators, providing nectar and pollen when little is available.

European honey bees are active right through the winter and visit many flowering shrubs when temperatures rise above 55 degrees F. Although most of Oregon's 500 species of native bees go dormant in winter, some, including bumblebee queens and several of our solitary mining bees, are active as early as

February and March. The pollen and nectar in these blooms are essential to these bees, fueling their search for new nests and provisioning their first brood. Late fall blooms can be critical for late-foraging pollinator species building fat reserves to last the winter.

Note that while many winter-blooming plants produce nectar and pollen, some are shaped in ways that restrict certain pollinator species. Typically, bumblebees and hummingbirds have the longest tongues and can reach down into longer flowers such as currants and heathers.

The following shrubs reliably bloom and add interest during fall and winter in the maritime Pacific Northwest. They are listed roughly in order of bloom, although the length of bloom of individual plants varies greatly. Bloom timing can also vary year to year due to variations in winter temperatures. Warm winters can lead to earlier bloom times.

BLOOM TIME: 🌸 SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER

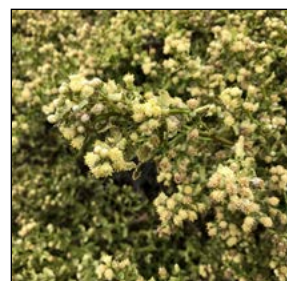


Baccharis pilularis 'Twin Peaks'

COYOTEBRUSH

Baccharis pilularis

Coyotebrush is native to the Oregon Coast and ranges south into California. It is usually seen as a medium to large (topping out around 8 feet), rounded shrub. However, many cultivated varieties are mounding, spreading groundcovers. Coyotebrush is in the daisy family (Asteraceae), but the inflorescence consists only of inconspicuous disc flowers, not the showy ray flowers characteristic of many Aster family members. Coyotebrush is dioecious, meaning it has separate male and female plants. Male plants are preferred in cultivation since female plants produce large numbers of wind-blown seeds. Male plants have yellowish flowers with a subtle, pleasing scent in September and October. Female plants have white flowers. Coyotebrush is susceptible to injury in cold winters and is best grown in a sheltered location. Buck deer will rub their antlers on *Baccharis*, which can cause damage. If injury does occur or if shaping is required, prune plants in spring.



Baccharis pilularis flowers

Evergreen

Height and width: up to 8 feet tall and wide. Some cultivars are much smaller.

Fragrance: Subtle, pleasing fragrance.

Cultural requirements: Full sun with some protection from winter cold inland. No summer water. Plants can be shaped with light shearing in spring.

Hardiness: USDA zones 8-9. Susceptible to cold injury in cold winters. (See the USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map at bit.ly/zml8bo/.)

Attractiveness to pollinators: Very attractive to honey bees, a wide variety of late-season bees and some butterflies and moths.

Cultivars: 'Twin Peaks', 'Pigeon Point', 'Pistol Pancake'.



Mature strawberry tree

STRAWBERRY TREE

Arbutus unedo

Strawberry tree is native throughout the Mediterranean basin and also occurs in Ireland. It gets its common name from the large size of the species and the spherical red fruit. The fruit are produced from the previous season's blooms and ripen at the same time as the new blooms occur, in fall. The fruit are edible and though not often consumed fresh, are used in preserves and distilled spirits in Europe. Strawberry tree forms a dense, rounded shrub or tree with leathery, dark green leaves. Depending on the cultivar, the flowers are white to pink, urn-shaped and occur in 2-inch-long clusters in abundance.



Strawberry tree flowers and fruit

Evergreen

Height and width: 15 feet tall by 20 feet wide. Listed cultivars are far smaller.

Fragrance: No fragrance.

Cultural requirements: Full sun. No summer irrigation once established. If placed where it has enough space, these plants require no pruning.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8. Foliar damage can occur at 10 degrees F or below.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Honey bees, bumblebees and hummingbirds.

Cultivars: 'Elfin King', 'Compacta', 'Oktoberfest'.



Fatsia japonica 'Variegata'

JAPANESE FATSIA

Fatsia japonica

Japanese fatsia is native to Japan and South Korea, where it occurs as a modest-sized upright shrub in woodlands. The leaves are large, dark green and conspicuously lobed, which gives the plant a tropical appearance in the landscape. The flowers are white and produced in spherical clusters about the size of a golf ball, which are borne in large panicles above the foliage. The flower display is unique, but they are sensitive to cold, and a hard freeze usually brings flowering to an end. Some variegated cultivars are available. This unusual shrub is suitable for protected, shady spots in the landscape where the flowers might be better protected from cold.



Japanese fatsia flowers

Evergreen

Height and width: Up to 10 feet tall and wide. Slow growing.

Fragrance: No fragrance.

Cultural requirements: Part shade to shade. Best with occasional summer water.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Attractive to flower flies.

Cultivars: 'Variegata', 'Spiders Web'.



Holly tea tree in bloom

HOLLY OSMANTHUS

Osmanthus heterophyllus

Holly osmanthus is one of several fall-flowering Osmanthus, but *O. heterophyllus* is the hardiest, most commonly grown species. It is a native of Japan, where it forms a dense, upright oval shrub. The leaves are shiny dark green. Juvenile leaves are notably spiny while adult leaves — produced near the top of the plant — lack spines. Mature plants may consist primarily of smooth leaves. The flowers are small, white and borne in groups of four to five in leaf axils. Although this plant is not conspicuous in bloom, the flowers are highly fragrant and the scent can be detected from many feet away on warm fall days.



Holly tea tree flowers

Evergreen

Height and width: 10 feet tall and 6 feet wide. Cultivars may be far smaller.

Fragrance: Flowers are very fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, summer irrigation. Responds well to pruning, and vigorous forms are often made into hedges.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 7.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Attractive to flower flies and somewhat attractive to honey bees.

Cultivars: 'Purpureus', 'Goshiki', 'Rotundifolius', 'Gulftide', 'Variegatus', 'Ogon', 'Sasaba'.



Mahonia eurybracteata in bloom

Photos: Jeff Stoven

MAHONIA EURYBRACTEATA

This evergreen shrub is native to China and is distinctive due to its narrow and smooth-edged leaves, separating it from some of the other spiny-leaved Mahonias. The foliage can appear tropical with the fine texture of the leaves. This plant prefers partial to full shade. In late fall this shrub sends up bold spikes of yellow flowers that attract bees. Silver-blue berries follow later in winter.



Flowers of *M. eurybracteata*

Evergreen

Height and width: 3–6 feet depending on cultivar.

Fragrance: Lightly fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Part sun to shade, average moisture needs.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 7.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Very attractive to honey bees and late-season bumblebee queens preparing for winter. Very attractive to hummingbirds.

Cultivars: 'Soft Caress', Indigo Flair™.



Mature tree form of *Camellia sasanqua* in bloom

SASANQUA CAMELLIA

Camellia sasanqua
(also *C. hiemalis*, *C. x vernalis*
and *C. sinensis*)

The sasanqua camellias are a diverse group sometimes referred to as “sun” camellias because of their tolerance of full sun. The many cultivars of *C. sasanqua* vary in growth habit as well as flower characteristics. In general, they have dark green foliage and a habit that varies from upright and spreading. Flowers vary from single to double and from white to red. Because of variations in flower time, it is possible to have a camellia in bloom throughout the winter. The leaves of *Camellia sinensis* are used for tea. The species is autumn-blooming and offers single white or pink flowers.



Flowers of *C. sasanqua*

Evergreen

Height and width: varies greatly. Upright forms may be 8 feet tall and 8 feet wide.

Fragrance: No fragrance.

Cultural requirements: Part shade to full sun with summer irrigation for *C. sasanqua*. Shade to part shade for *C. sinensis*.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 7.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Honey bees and hummingbirds are attracted to single-flowered cultivars.

Cultivars: Too many to list.



Chaparral currant in bloom

CHAPARRAL CURRANT

Ribes malvaceum

Chaparral currant is a native of California that is related to the spring-blooming Pacific Northwest native flowering currant, *R. sanguineum*. It has a distinctly upright habit and produces leaves and shoots that are noticeably aromatic. It is drought tolerant and will lose its leaves in summer, going almost totally deciduous. This characteristic does take some getting used to. With the onset of rain in fall it begins leafing out and flowering. Although not as showy as flowering currant, it produces clusters of pink flowers from mid-December through April. The flowers attract overwintering hummingbirds as well as longer-tongued bees, particularly early emerging bumblebee queens on warm January and February days.



Flowers of chaparral currant

Summer deciduous

Height and width: 10 feet tall and 8 feet wide.

Fragrance: No fragrance.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, no summer irrigation.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Highly attractive to both hummingbirds and early season bumblebee queens.

Cultivars: ‘Dancing Tassels’, ‘Christy Ridge’, ‘Cupertino Rose’.

🌸 MID-DECEMBER-APRIL



Royal grevillea in bloom

ROYAL GREVILLEA

Grevillea victoriae

Royal grevillea is a fast-growing evergreen shrub native to southeastern Australia. It forms a large, rounded shrub, with foliage that is an attractive olive-green above and silvery below. The flowers are orange-red in color and are borne in pendant clusters whose unique appearance sometimes gives the plant the common name of “spider plant.” Royal grevillea has a long bloom period, which extends from midwinter into early spring. Even in bud the flowers are showy, and once open they attract overwintering hummingbirds as well as bees.



Royal grevillea flowers

Evergreen

Height and width: 8 feet tall by 10 feet wide

Fragrance: No fragrance.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, drought tolerant but some summer irrigation is OK. Avoid use of phosphorus-containing fertilizers.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8. Cultivars vary in hardiness.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Very attractive to hummingbirds as well as early season bumblebee queens.

Cultivars: ‘Marshall Olbrich’, ‘Murray Valley Queen’.

🌸 JANUARY-MARCH



Viburnum x bodnantense ‘Dawn’

VIBURNUM X BODNANTENSE

This deciduous viburnum is a hybrid of *V. farreri* and *V. grandiflorum*, which was raised at Bodnant Gardens in Wales around 1935. It develops into a tall, upright multistemmed shrub whose foliage emerges bronze in spring before becoming dark green. Flowers are pink and borne in 2- to 3-inch-wide heads on bare branches in midwinter to early spring. The flowers are fragrant, but open flowers are susceptible to frost and wet weather. The long bloom period means that some flowers escape damage to perfume the garden.



Viburnum x bodnantense flowers

Deciduous

Height and width: 9 feet tall and 5 feet wide.

Fragrance: Fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun. Regular summer water.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 4.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Limited attractiveness.

Cultivars: ‘Dawn’, ‘Pink Dawn’, ‘Charles Lamont’, ‘Deben’.



Groundcover of winter heath in bloom

ALPINE HEATH

Erica carnea

IRISH HEATHER

E. erigena

WINTER HEATH

E. x darleyensis

The heaths are a large group of plants, most of which are not fully hardy for landscape use, or are summer- or fall-flowering. Both alpine heath and Irish heather and their hybrid, winter heath, are hardy and among the best-known winter-flowering plants in the Pacific Northwest. In general, alpine heath and winter heath are low, spreading plants which make effective and colorful groundcovers in the winter garden. Irish heath, in contrast, has a distinctly upright habit. Among these species, there are a wide array of cultivars differing in growth habit, foliage and bloom. Flower color varies from white to pink to red.



'Mediterranean Pink' winter heath

Evergreen

Height and width: Size varies by species and cultivar.

Fragrance: Not fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, some summer water. Pruning is rarely required.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 7.

Attractiveness to pollinators: An important source of nectar for early season bumblebee queens.

Cultivars: Many available.



Wintersweet in bloom

WINTERSWEET

Chimonanthus praecox

Chimonanthus is a genus of evergreen or deciduous shrubs native to China that are grown for their fragrant flowers. *C. praecox* is the most commonly grown species in the genus, forming an upright, multi-stemmed coarse-textured shrub. The common name wintersweet refers to the exceptionally fragrant yellow flowers, which dangle from the bare branches throughout January. The scent of the flowers may carry far from the plant on warm winter days. The flowers are waxy and hang downward on the branches, so they are undeterred by rain and it is not unusual for this plant to flower even during periods of snow. Wintersweet is one of the most fragrant plants for the winter garden.



Flowers of wintersweet

Deciduous

Height and width: 10 feet tall by 6 feet wide. Upright, arching growth habit.

Fragrance: Highly fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Part shade to full sun, some summer water.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 7.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Limited attractiveness.

Cultivars: 'Grandiflorus', 'Luteus'.



Sweet blox in full bloom

SWEET BOX

Sarcococca confusa,
S. hookeriana, *S. ruscifolia*

Sweet box refers to one of several evergreen shrubs with fragrant flowers native to China and the Himalayas. The species in cultivation vary somewhat in height, but all spread by suckers to form dense evergreen thickets. *S. hookeriana* (especially *S. hookeriana* var. *humilis*) is taller (to 4 feet) and spreads vigorously, whereas *S. confusa* and *S. ruscifolia* grow to perhaps 2 feet and are clumpers that send up more shoots but do not spread. In January, diminutive white flowers are produced along the stems. Sweet box is monoecious, meaning that separate male and female flowers are mingled on the stems and partly hidden by the foliage. Although the flowers are not particularly showy, they are highly fragrant and the scent can be detected at a distance. These are some of the most commonly grown winter-blooming shrubs and are especially useful as a tall groundcover in shady situations.



Sweet box flowers

Evergreen

Height and width: Up to 4 feet high. These plants spread by suckers to 5 feet wide.

Fragrance: Very fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Part shade to shade, performs well even in dry shade.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 7.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Limited attractiveness.

Cultivars: *S. hookeriana* var. *digyna* and *S. hookeriana* var. *humilis* are commonly sold forms.



Mahonia x media 'Soft Caress'.

MAHONIA X MEDIA

This plant is a hybrid of *M. japonica* and *M. lomariifolia*, which are native to Japan and Southeast Asia, respectively. Like the parents, *M. x media* forms a tall, broad, texturally striking plant as a result of the large, compound leaves, which are over 12 inches long and composed of 15 or more leaflets. In January, the shrub produces 12-inch erect vase-shaped spikes of bright yellow flowers at the shoot tips. In bloom the plants are showy and highly attractive to European honeybees on warm winter days. The flowers open sequentially along each spike, and so flowering persists for about a month. The flowers are often followed by clusters of blue fruit.



Mahonia x media flower cluster

Evergreen

Height and width: Vase-shaped, upright habit to 10 feet. Spreads to 8 feet.

Fragrance: Flowers have minimal fragrance, although 'Lionel Fortescue' is very fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, occasional summer water. Should not require pruning.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Very attractive to hummingbirds and honey bees.

Cultivars: 'Charity', 'Winter Sun', 'Hope', 'Underway', 'Lionel Fortescue'



Clematis cirrhosa in bloom

CLEMATIS CIRRHOSA

This species is native to the Mediterranean basin in southern Europe and North Africa. This evergreen vine produces thin stems with paired trifoliate compound leaves. The stems also have tendrils that enable it to adhere and climb a trellis or the foliage and stems of nearby plants. In late fall and winter, clusters of cream-colored, pendulous flowers are produced. There are two recognized varieties of the species. *C. cirrhosa* var. *balearica* is from the western Mediterranean island of Menorca and features finely cut foliage and lemon-scented flowers. In the variety *C. cirrhosa* var. *purpurascens*, the flower petals are prominently speckled with purple markings.



Clematis cirrhosa var. *purpurascens* 'Freckles'

Evergreen

Height and width: Climbs to 10 feet. Spread depends on trellis.

Fragrance: Not fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun. Requires either a trellis or supporting plant. Best in a protected location.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 7.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Attractive to honey bees.

Cultivars: 'Wisley Cream', *C. cirrhosa* var. *purpurascens* 'Freckles', 'Jingle Bells'.



Winter jasmine trained as a standard

WINTER JASMINE

Jasminum nudiflorum

Winter jasmine is an adaptable, vigorous, deciduous shrub native to northern China. It produces masses of vigorous green stems that root on contact with the soil. This enables the plant to be grown as a mounding shrub, a low hedge, a groundcover or — if some sort of support is provided — as a vine. It is often seen covering fences or trailing over walls, where the flowers are displayed to best advantage. The flower buds are waxy red and open to single, bright yellow flowers that are borne along the bare stems in January. Unlike other jasmine, the flowers are not fragrant but contrast well with the green stems.



Winter jasmine blooms

Deciduous

Height and width: Unsupported, it forms a mound 4 feet tall and 6 feet wide. With a trellis, it can be much bigger.

Fragrance: Not fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun best for flower production. Some summer water.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 6.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Attractive to honey bees.

Cultivars: 'Aureum'.



Yellow-flowered witchhazel in full bloom

WITCHHAZEL

Hamamelis x intermedia,
H. vernalis, *H. virginiana*,
H. mollis, *H. japonica*

These deciduous shrubs are native to both eastern Asia as well as eastern North America. Although both Asian and American forms are in cultivation, the most commonly grown form is *H. x intermedia*. This is a hybrid of Chinese and Japanese species, and many cultivars are available. In general, these are medium to large deciduous shrubs which develop an upright but ultimately wide-spreading habit. In bloom they are among the most spectacular and prized winter-blooming plants. Flowers appear on bare branches and consist of many strap-shaped petals. Flower color ranges from yellow to copper to red. They are fragrant in some but not all cases. The flowers of the American species *H. vernalis* and *H. virginiana* are known for their fragrance, as is Chinese witchhazel (*H. mollis*). Cultivars of *H. x intermedia* vary widely in fragrance.



Witchhazel 'Diane'

Deciduous, although dead brown leaves may persist on some cultivars.

Height and width: Size varies, but may be 10 feet tall and 12 feet wide at maturity.

Fragrance: Some cultivars develop fragrance; some are not fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, regular summer water.

Hardiness: American species are hardy to USDA Zone 4; Asian species and *H. x intermedia* to Zone 5.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Limited attractiveness.

Cultivars: Too many to list.



Mature loquat

LOQUAT

Eriobotrya japonica

Loquat is native to China and Japan and is usually seen as a single-stemmed small tree. The leaves are up to 12-inch long, coarsely toothed, medium green above and woolly gray below. In foliage alone, the tree brings a tropical appearance to the garden. The flowers are small, white and lightly fragrant and are borne in panicles up to 6 inches long at shoot tips in January. In bloom the tree is quite showy, and it has been known to set a few of the orange, edible fruit in the Willamette Valley. It is prone to damage from cold, freezing rain and wet snow and is best in a courtyard or other protected spot or as an espalier on a warm wall.



Loquat blooms

Evergreen

Height and width: Up to 15 feet high by 12 feet wide.

Fragrance: Lightly fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, some summer water. Best in a protected spot.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Limited attractiveness.

Cultivars: A number are available, of uncertain hardiness in western Oregon.



Foliage of *C. avellana* 'Burgundy Lace' Photo: Rebecca McCluskey

HAZELNUT

Corylus avellana

European hazelnut is widely cultivated in the Willamette Valley and is familiar for its pendulous yellow catkins, which are produced in January. The lesser-known native hazel, *Corylus californica*, is found in central and western Oregon and is also winter-blooming. Of the ornamental forms of hazel, the oldest is *C. avellana* 'Contorta', a green-leaved shrub with twisted branches and twigs that blooms in January. However, it is susceptible to eastern filbert blight, the major disease problem on European hazelnut. Fortunately, Oregon State University recently introduced two cultivars resistant to Eastern filbert blight, both of which have purple foliage that fades to green during the growing season. 'Red Dragon' has twisted stems and purple catkins. 'Burgundy Lace' has upright growth and an unusual leaf shape that resembles a Japanese maple and purple catkins. 'Burgundy Lace' also produces edible nuts.



C. avellana 'Red Dragon'

Deciduous

Height and width: 12 feet tall and 10 feet wide in tree form.

Fragrance: No fragrance.

Cultural requirements: Full sun.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 4.

Attractiveness to pollinators: A highly abundant source of pollen for honey bees initiating their brood rearing in late winter.

Cultivars: 'Burgundy Lace', 'Red Dragon'.



Paper Daphne in bloom

PAPER DAPHNE

Daphne bholua

This Daphne is native to lower elevations of the eastern Himalayas, where historically the bark was used to make paper. In the garden it forms an upright shrub to 8 feet tall in favorable locations, with an open habit. Leaves are narrow and medium green and may be evergreen or deciduous, depending on cultivar and also on winter temperatures. The flowers are small, pinkish-white and borne in clusters at the shoot tips in January or February. As with other Daphne, the flowers are highly fragrant and the scent may carry a considerable distance on a warm winter day. The species is somewhat tender and is best placed in a protected location.



Paper daphne blooms

Evergreen or deciduous:

Depends on cultivar.

Height and width: 8 feet tall by 5 feet wide.

Fragrance: Highly fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, well-drained soil. Probably best with some protection.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Attractive to hummingbirds.

Cultivars: 'Jaqueline Postill', 'Ghurka'.



Silk tassel in bloom

SILK TASSEL

Garrya elliptica

Silk tassel is a large, dense evergreen shrub native to the central Oregon coast southwards into California. It is dioecious, meaning there are separate male and female plants. In January, both male and female plants produce small yellow flowers in long, drooping catkins that, in male forms, may be 12 inches long. A plant in full bloom covered with catkins is a striking textural addition to the winter garden. Besides *G. elliptica*, *G. fremontii* is also native to the montane Pacific Northwest, and a smaller species, *G. buxifolia*, is found in southwestern Oregon. Hybrids of *G. elliptica* and *G. fremontii* go by the name of *G. x issaquahensis*.



Silk tassel flowers

Evergreen

Height and width: 15 feet tall by 15 feet wide.

Fragrance: Not fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, lots of space.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8. *G. fremontii* is hardier.

Attractiveness to pollinators: None observed.

Cultivars: *G. elliptica*: 'Evie', 'James Roof'. *G. x issaquahensis*: 'Glasnevin Wine', 'Pat Ballard'



Actostaphylos 'Austin Griffiths'

MANZANITA

Arctostaphylos spp.

Manzanita is a large group of evergreen shrubs native throughout the western U.S. The many species and cultivars range in habit from groundcovers (including the familiar kinnikinnick) to mounding shrubs, to upright, multistemmed tree-like shrubs up to 12 feet tall. Most of these bloom from late February through April. Only a select few, including 'Austin Griffiths', 'Sentinel' and 'Siskiyou Pink', bloom during winter. These are all medium to large shrubs that are showy in bloom, featuring clusters of white or pink downward-facing bell-shaped flowers. These are highly attractive to hummingbirds and a host of native pollinators, including bumblebees.



Actostaphylos 'Sentinel'

Evergreen

Height and width: 8 feet tall by 10 feet wide.

Fragrance: Not fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, well-drained soil. Do not irrigate in summer.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Highly attractive to hummingbirds and early season bumblebees.

Cultivars: 'Austin Griffiths', 'Sentinel', 'Siskiyou Pink'



Rhododendron 'Rosa Mundi'

RHODODENDRON

Rhododendron spp.

Rhododendrons are best known as spring-blooming shrubs, but a number of species of this large genus do produce flowers in winter or early spring. These include *R. barbatum*, *R. dauricum*, *R. lanigerum*, *R. moupinense*, *R. mucronulatum*, *R. pemakoense*, *R. praevernum* and *R. strigillosum*. A number of early-blooming cultivars have been selected from these species, and many hybrids have been produced. Bloom time is dependent on winter temperatures, and quality of the blooms can be affected by freezes or heavy rain. But under favorable conditions these are spectacular additions to the winter garden. One of the best known is 'Christmas Cheer', which produces trusses of pale pink flowers in February, while 'Lee's Scarlet' produces trusses of red flowers starting in late January.



Rhododendron 'Lee's Scarlet'

Evergreen

Height and width: Size varies by species and cultivar.

Fragrance: Not fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Sun to part shade, regular summer water.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 7.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Visited by early season bumblebees.

Cultivars: 'Christmas Cheer', 'Etta Burroughs', 'Harry Carter', 'Lee's Scarlet', Nobleum Group (Album, Coccineum, Venustum), 'Seta', 'Snow Lady', 'Peter Faulk', 'Pink Snowflakes', 'Praecox', 'Rosa Mundi'.



White forsythia in bloom

WHITE FORSYTHIA

Abeliophyllum distichum

White forsythia is a relative of the later-flowering common forsythia. It is a small, multistemmed shrub, native to the mountains of Korea, where it is becoming rare. The plant has an arching habit, becoming a shrub that is wider than tall. White flowers tinged with pink are produced on the bare stems in mid-February. The flowers are fragrant but are sensitive to hard frosts, so positioning the plant against a warm wall or with other protection is best. Because it produces long canes, it also makes a good candidate for espalier.



White forsythia flowers

Deciduous

Height and width: 4 feet tall by 6 feet wide.

Fragrance: Lightly fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, summer irrigation, requires annual pruning to retain shape.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 5.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Attractive to honey bees.

Cultivars: 'Roseum'.



Winter honeysuckle in full bloom

WINTER HONEYSUCKLE

Lonicera standishii,
L. fragrantissimum,
L. x purpusii

L. standishii and *L. fragrantissimum* are large, multistemmed shrubs that are native to China. *L. x purpusii* is a hybrid between the two species and is also a large, semievergreen shrub. All these plants form upright, arching plants in the garden. Flowers are small and white and produced along mostly bare branches. Winter honeysuckle is not particularly showy in bloom, but the flowers are highly fragrant.



Winter honeysuckle flowers

Semi-evergreen

Height and width: 8 feet tall by 10 feet wide.

Fragrance: Very fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, requires annual pruning to retain shape.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 5.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Attractive to honey bees.

Cultivars: *L. x purpusii* 'Winter Beauty'.



Higan cherry in full bloom

HIGAN CHERRY

Prunus subhirtella
'Autumnalis' and
'Autumnalis Rosea'

Higan cherry is a variable species native to Japan. Most cultivated forms are spring-blooming small trees with a weeping habit. 'Autumnalis' and 'Autumnalis Rosea' are two cultivars that have an upright habit and will flower sporadically in fall and winter when temperatures are warm, followed by a flush of flowers in early spring. Flowers on 'Autumnalis' are semidouble and light pink, while those of 'Autumnalis Rosea' are deeper pink.



Higan cherry flowers

Deciduous

Height and width: 20 feet tall by 20 feet wide.

Time of bloom: Sporadically in fall, full bloom in early spring.

Fragrance: Not fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun; some summer irrigation.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 4.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Attractive to a broad range of bees.

Cultivars: 'Autumnalis', 'Autumnalis Rosea'.



Cornelian cherry in full bloom

CORNELIAN CHERRY

Cornus mas

Cornelian cherry is an unusual dogwood native to southern Europe, which grows naturally as a multistemmed shrub or may be trained as a small tree. The flowers are small and yellow, lacking the large bracts that make other well-known dogwoods such popular spring-blooming trees. However, they are borne in abundance on the bare stems at the end of winter, turning the entire plant yellow in the process. The flowers are followed by edible red, or, in some cases, yellow fruit.



Cornelian cherry flowers

Deciduous

Height and width: 15 feet tall and 15 feet wide.

Time of bloom: Mid-February–March.

Fragrance: Not fragrant.

Cultural requirements: Full sun, some summer irrigation.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 4.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Attractive to a broad range of bees.

Cultivars: ‘Aurea’, ‘Golden Glory’, ‘Variegata’. Other forms have been selected for fruit qualities like ‘Elegant’, ‘Exotica’, ‘Pioneer’, ‘Red Star’, ‘Sunrise’, etc.



Paper bush in bloom

CHINESE PAPER BUSH

Edgeworthia chrysantha

Chinese paper bush often is an item in collectors’ gardens for good reason. This shrub has sunny yellow or even orange-to-red late-winter blooms which are also fragrant. The blooms are borne in drooping silvery clusters and begin to form in late summer, making them attractive throughout the winter prior to opening. Individual flowers may begin to open in January. In full bloom, clusters of tubular flowers hang from bare stems. This plant is also attractive in the growing season, with long (to 5 inches) dark green leaves, which can give a tropical feel. Paper bush is susceptible to winter freezes and is best placed in a protected location.



Paper bush flowers

Deciduous

Height and width: 4–8 feet.

Fragrance: Fragrant blooms.

Cultural requirements: Sun or part-shade; some summer irrigation.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 8.

Attractiveness to pollinators: Somewhat attractive to bees.

Cultivars: ‘Gold Rush’, ‘Snow Cream’, ‘Akebono’, ‘Red Dragon’.



Winter hazel in full bloom

WINTER HAZEL

Corylopsis spp.

About six species of this Asian native can be found at nurseries. Bloom and plant size vary. Most species are large deciduous shrubs, and some can be developed into small trees. In early spring pendent clusters of small, lemon-yellow flowers dangle on bare branches. Branches form a zigzag pattern, which adds to the architectural beauty of this plant. The flowers are fragrant and attractive to pollinators.



Winter hazel flowers

Deciduous

Height and width: 4–15 feet.

Fragrance: Fragrant blooms.

Cultural requirements:

Sun or part-shade; summer irrigation.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 5–6.

Attractiveness to

pollinators: Attractive to hummingbirds and honey bees.

Cultivars: ‘Golden Spring’, ‘Spring Purple’.

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