

Live Free and Dig

with the Littleton Garden Club

Winter interest in the garden

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As the leaves have fallen and the colors of autumn are muted, there are so many ways to create interest in the garden. Your winter garden can be transformed into a place of natural beauty using an array of interesting bark, berries, silhouettes, persisting foliage, seed heads and evergreens.

Besides beautiful birch trees, bark from other plants also provide great winter interest. One of my favorite shrubs is Red Twig Dogwood. The variety 'Artic Fire' has bright yellow stems and 'Midwinter Fire' has dramatic orange stems with crimson tips. Once spring comes, these shrubs are great

pollinators. Another shrub with interesting bark is Ninebark (*Physocarpus*). It is a native shrub with four season interest - flowers in the spring, beautiful leaves throughout the growing season in burgundy, green or gold, autumn color, and white exfoliating bark in the winter. Paperbark Maple (*Acer griseum*) has spectacular cinnamon-colored exfoliating bark.

Berries are a colorful feature of a winter garden. American Cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*), a native to North America, has white flowers in the spring, deep red fall foliage color and bright red berries that persist through much of the winter. Black Chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*), also a native, has

beautiful white flowers in the spring, vibrant orange and red fall color and blackish purple fruit that sometimes persist through the winter. Winterberry holly is another great choice for a winter garden with its numerous cultivars bearing yellow or red fruit. 'Berry Poppins' is a dwarf variety that is laden with red fruit from fall through winter. It requires a male pollinator such as 'Mr. Poppins' in order to produce fruit.

Leaving the spent flowers of hydrangea, astilbe, sedum, black-eyed susan and ornamental grasses provide interesting persisting foliage and seed heads, adding additional texture to your winter garden.

Evergreens are an important feature of the

winter garden with their array of various shades of green, blue and yellow. Tall conifers such as blue spruce, white pine and Eastern Red Cedar, a native juniper, provide the backdrop of the garden; and lower evergreens such as hollies, yews and rhododendron create layering with depth and variety of needle and leaf textures.

The silhouettes of deciduous trees provide the final backdrop of the winter garden.

All these elements create a fascinating interlude through our long, cold winter until the new growth of spring.

For more information on our club or meetings, visit: <https://www.littletonnhgardclub.org/>.