

Time-Saving Mighty-Mite Shrubs that Outshine Perennials!

N = Native or nativar to North America

Snowberry *Symphoricarpus* 'Proud Berry' Sun 3'-4', pink flowers summer, pink berries fall, Z3-7 Native

Shrubs can save maintenance time and money! *Generally speaking, one shrub can fill the space that requires multiple perennials. This not only saves maintenance time, but may save money as well.

*Overall, shrubs require: -less water than many perennials -less fertilizer -do not need the same nutrient-rich soil -are more resilient to climate change. Shrubs simply do not require the same maintenance as perennials that usually require MULTIPLE MAINTENANCE 'TOUCHES': deadheading, dividing, cutting back, ...**This presentation features One, or NO Touch Shrubs!** The majority of the shrubs require only one maintenance touch a year (typically pruning). Some shrubs rarely need a maintenance touch! Weigela 'My Money Purple Effect' in my garden. I have not 'touched' this shrub in 4 years

General Rules of Thumb for Pruning Flowering Shrubs

***Prune spring flowering shrubs right after they bloom but before July 4th.** Forsythia SHOW OFF 'Sugar Baby' Sun – Part Shade 1.5'-2.5' Spring Z 5-8 Deer resistant Prune 2

***Prune summer and fall flowering shrubs in late fall, winter, or early spring while they are still dormant or just breaking dormancy.** Clethra Summersweet 'Hummingbird' Sun-Part Shade 2'-4' July-August Z4-9 Fragrant! Native Deer resistant Buttery-yellow fall foliage

***Don't assume all flowering shrubs need pruning every year.** Most common reasons for pruning:

-Control size. Ideally you should be purchasing shrubs that mature to the size you want -Remove broken, diseased or crossing branches -For variegated plants, remove non-variegated leaf branches -For suckering shrubs (i.e., Forsythia), remove some, or all suckers, by cutting the sucker off just beneath the soil surface

***Pruning to rejuvenate older shrubs** Many overgrown shrubs can be severely pruned in late winter or early spring

***Pruning to thin stems within a shrub.** Remove up to 1/3 of stems from interior, cutting stems to the ground. Allows more sunlight and airflow to the shrub's interior.

Growing shrubs in containers

*Select containers that are large enough to accommodate roots and allow growth. 18"-24" top diameter, and a depth of at least 2' *Choose pots that are **lightweight** (e.g. fiberglass, resin, plastic). OR use a plant caddy with wheels, or containers with built in caster wheels. *If you will be leaving the containers outside year-round in colder zones, use containers that are **frost resistant** (fiberglass, resin, plastic, wood) *If the container will be left outside in the winter, **choose plants that are hardy to at least one zone colder** than where you live.

*If the container **will be left outside in winter** choose plants that are hardy to **at least one zone colder** than where you live

*Fill the container with a premier organic potting soil– **Espoma Potting Mix** which includes organic matter: Earthworm castings, Alfalfa Meal, Kelp Meal and Feather Meal

*You will need to **refresh the soil** in the container every three years or so. **Root pruning** can also be done at this time to help maintain size.

***Fertilize shrubs in containers** in spring with Osmocote 14-14-14 - slowly releases fertilizer over 3-4 months

*In mid to late November (Zone 5) **water pots one last time and move into an unheated garage, shed or barn.** Note: if moving evergreens into unheated area, there needs to be some sunlight, can't be totally dark.

***If you will be leaving the container outside in winter:** 1) If there is no overhead protection – such as an overhang/eaves or porch roof - cover the plant with white opaque tarp and secure it to the pot
2) AND if the shrub is marginally hardy for your area, wrap the pot with bubble wrap. If possible, also shelter

the pot from winter winds. The east side of a building is a great spot

Time-Saving, Mighty-Mite Shrubs

For each of the featured flowering shrubs I will note pruning recommendations as follows: **Prune 1:** Summer & fall flowering shrubs. Prune in late fall, winter, or early spring **Prune 2:** Spring flowering shrubs. Prune after spring bloom

***Syringa 'Baby Kim' Lilac** Sun 2'-3' Spring Z3-8 Deer resistant Prune 2

***Fothergilla x intermedia 'Blue Mist'** Bottlebrush Sun – Part Shade 2'-3' Spring Z4/5-8 Prune 2

***Azalea 'Karen'** (left, lavender-purple flowers, 2'-4', Z5-9) & **'Stewartstonian'** (4'-5', red flowers, Z5-8) Spring Sun – Part Shade Prune 2

***Rhododendron yakushimanum 'Ken Janeck'** and **'Percy Wiseman'** 3' Z4/5-8 Part Sun – Shade Prune 2

***Prunus x cistena Purple Leaf Sand Cherry 'Stay Classy'** Sun – Part Sun 3'-4' Spring Z2-8 Drought tolerant White flowers, not a heavy bloomer. Prune 2 If grown in container, use Alyssum 'Snow Princess' as spiller

***Cornus mas 'Variegata' Variegated Cornelian Cherry** Part Sun – Part Shade 15'-25' (very slow growing) Spring Red cherry-like fruit in summer used for syrups and preserves Z4-7 Deer resistant Prune 2

***Forsythia x intermedia 'Gold Leaf'** Part Sun – Part Shade 3'-5' Spring Z5-9 This is not a heavy flowering Forsythia Prune 2

***Salix candida 'Iceberg Alley'** Sageleaf Willow Sun-Part Sun 3'-6' Spring Z2-6 Deer resistant Catkins have red overtones and yellow anthers. N Prune 2

***Pieris japonica 'Cavatine'** Dwarf Japanese Andromeda Part Sun-Part Shade 2'-3' Spring Z4/5-8 Deer resistant Prune 2 If grown in container, use a pollinator friendly spiller annual such as Lantana 'Luscious Grape'

***Pieris japonica 'Flaming Silver'** Part Sun – Part Shade 4' - 5' Spring Z5 - 8 Evergreen Prune 2

***Weigela florida 'Midnight Sun'** Sun (12"-18" Sun) Spring Deer resistant Z4-8 Prune 2

***Sorbaria 'Matcha Ball'** Ash Leaf Spirea Sun-Part Shade 2'-3' Summer (few if any blooms) Z3-7 Prune 1

***Spirea betulifolia 'Glow Girl'** Birchleaf Spirea Sun-Part Sun 2'-4' Spring Z3-9 Great fall color! Prune 2

***Spirea Double Play 'Doozie'** Sun – Part Sun 2'-3' Summer Z3-8 Deer resistant Vibrant orange-red leaves in spring Sterile Prune 1 Spirea japonica is invasive in at least 6 states, including PA

***Physocarpus opulifolius Ninebark** Sun-Part Shade Heights 3'-10' Late Spring-early summer Z2-7 N Prune 2 Chicago Botanic Garden started a 6-year trial on 26 cultivars in 2019. These two were a few that stood out 1/2 through trial. 'Amber Jubilee' 5'-7' 'Dart's Gold' 4'-5'

***Five-Leaf Variegated Aralia Eleutherococcus sieboldianus 'Variegatus'** Part Shade – Shade Spring 6'-8' Z4-8 Prune anytime My garden

***Disanthus cercidifolius** (6'-10') and c. **'Ena Nishiki'** (4'-6') Sun – Part Shade Fall (little purple flowers) Z5-8 Member of the Witch Hazel family Prune 1

***Hydrangea arborescens 'Seaside Serenade 'Bar Harbor** (left, 3'-4') and **Invincibelle 'Wee White'** (1'-2') Smooth Hydrangea Sun – Part Shade Summer Z3-8 Native Prune 1

***Hydrangea paniculata Panicle Hydrangea 'Fire Light Tidbit'** (left, 3') and **'Little Hottie'** (3'-5') Sun –Part Sun Z3-8 Drought tolerant Prune 1

***Hydrangea macrophylla 'Wedding Gown'** (3', Z5-9) and **'Pop Star'** (18"-36", Z4-9, lacecap flowers blue or pink based on soil chemistry) Part Sun – Part Shade Summer-Fall Both bloom on old and new wood

***Hydrangea serrata Mountain Hydrangea 'Tuff Stuff Ah-Ha'** Sun – Part Sun (blooms less in part shade) 2'-3' Summer Z5-9 Blooms on old and new wood. IF pruning needed Prune 2

***NEW! Hydrangea cross between serrata and macrophylla** Sun – Part Sun Heights range between 2'-4' Z4-9 **Let's Dance 'Can Do', 'Arriba', 'Sky View'** (2'-3') Sun-Part Sun/Part Shade. New crosses will have macrophylla x serrata on the tag

***Hydrangea x 'Fairytrail Bride'** Cascading Hydrangea Sun – Part Sun 4' Late Spring-Summer Zones 6-9 Blooms on old wood Plant of the Year winner at the 2018 Chelsea Flower Show

***Lespedeza bicolor (also sold as thunbergii) 'Little Buddy'** Sun – Part Shade 2'-3' Aug-Sept Z4-8 Deer resistant Shorter than 'Gilbraltar' (up to 6') May die back to the ground in colder zones Prune 1

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