

# 4 Season Gardens

## Watch when you shop

Most gardeners buy their plants in the months of May and June. But the garden has a year round presence. So visit gardens in spring, fall, the heat of summer, and even winter. Our display gardens will give you ideas any time of year. By visiting and shopping at different times of year, you help guarantee a 4 season selection.

## Components of the winter garden

Obviously, foliage is predominant over bloom unless you have the good fortune to have a warm greenhouse. There are brilliant colors for winter--some of the finest conifers are at their best in winter. *Pinus contorta* 'Chief Joseph' and *Pinus virginiana* 'Wate's Golden' are two pines that turn brilliant gold in winter. There are also many evergreen perennials. *Heucheras* hold their color very well, and fortunately, they come in many colors of the rainbow. Using *heucheras* as groundcover will assure color throughout the year.

Though not as colorful as the foliage of evergreen *heucheras* or *penstemon*, ornamental grasses hold their form and interest through the winter months. Tall (6' or more) *Miscanthus* and *Panicums* provide fabulous structural interest waving in the wind and collecting a layer of frost. Shorter grasses (4') such as *Calamagrostis* likewise add interest, particularly when planted in groups. The small grasses such as *fescues* are pretty when the snow cover is melted, but are often buried by deep snow.

## Ushering in spring

*Hellebores*, such as *Helleborus x orientalis* (Perennial Plant of the Year, 2005) are among the earliest blooms. These woodland beauties are finally getting the recognition they deserve. Soon thereafter, *Drabas*, *Arabis*, *Alyssum*, *Pulmonarias*, *Rhododendrons*, *Peonies* and more join the show.

## Summer strength

It is a myth that perennials don't bloom all season. Many perennials are ever blooming. Try *scabiosas*, *Persicaria* 'Darjeeling Red', *Abronia*, *Penstemon* 'Red Rocks', *Aquilegia* 'Denver Gold', *Gaillardia* 'Fanfare' or the *delospermas* for all summer color. Our hardy roses are constant or reblooming varieties.

## Extending fall

The beauty of fall foliage is easy to achieve with a few maples, but remember that hardy geraniums have brilliant red fall color. Roses that produce colorful hips will provide interest well after the blooms have faded. Shrubs with berries also provide interest into winter, such as holly or the stunningly attractive *Symphoricarpos* 'Amethyst' with berries of that color. Planting containers with evergreen material will keep them fetching throughout the year.



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## Evergreen perennials

Heuchera 'Lime Rickey'	bright gold
Heuchera 'Obsidian'	dark bronze, near black
Heuchera 'Frosted Violet'	shimmering violet
Heuchera 'Marmalade'	orange tones with pink hues in winter
Heuchera 'Silver Scrolls'	purple overlaid with silver
Penstemon 'Purple Haze'	perfect foliage in harsh winter, use instead of kinnickinick--better coverage, better bloom
Saxifraga	dwarf, low mats of evergreen foliage, many selections

## Deciduous trees with winter interest

Acer griseum	paperbark maple has wonderful peeling bark
Acer pensylvanicum 'Erythrocladum'	stripe bark maple, red and white striped bark, candy cane effect
Betula jacquemontii	this birch has especially white bark
Sorbus europaeus	the mountain ash offers beautiful berry clusters

## Long blooming perennials

Gaillardia 'Fanfare'	Continuous June to frost. A constant bouquet of yellow and red.
Geranium 'Patricia'	Bright magenta with black center. June onward. 4'
Daphne 'Summer Ice'	Spring until December, fragrant compact shrub.
Scabiosa 'Butterfly Blue' or 'Pink Mist'	Blooms spring to as late as Dec.
Penstemon 'Red Rocks'	Flowers actually pink, but quite constant through summer. Attractive 15" plant.
Persicaria affinis 'Darjeeling Red'	Rose pink spikes (10") spring to frost
Zauchneria garrettii 'Orange Carpet'	Scarlet orange July to frost, low cascading.

## Early spring bloom

Helleborus x orientalis	Several colors, white, pink, purple. 12" very early, as soon as snow melts or first hint of spring
Draba (all species)	Big variety, but almost all are dwarf buns with brilliant yellow flowers that cover the plant in April.
Pulmonaria	Pink and/or blue flowers bloom early, and are attractive to hummingbirds as they return to the area after winter.
Daphne cneorum	Rock daphne is perhaps the most fragrant of all plants.
Iberis sempervirens	Bright white display atop evergreen foliage. Candytuft