

Plants with Something Extra

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As you develop your shopping list this year consider some “super” plants that add something extra to the whole environment or solve garden problems like erosion, deer damage, barren areas where little grows, and lack of interest in some seasons.

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If you have room for a large tree, the oaks support the most insects and nuts. The red oak, *Quercus coccinea*, also adds fall color. We offer disease resistant dogwood, *Cornus florida*, that is long flowering, with fall color and fall fruit needed by migrating birds. The spicebush, *Lindera benzoin*, has early yellow blooms for emerging pollinators, supports butterfly larva, and adds fall color to shade. *Leucothoe* is an evergreen, deer resistant shade shrub. The *Viburnum* group (part to full sun) supply nectar, pollen and leaves for insects, fruit and cover for birds. Blueberries (*Vaccinium*) come in a variety of sizes for a sunny location, supply fruit and nesting for birds, great fall color and winter interest with red stems.

If your sunny areas have turned to dry shade, Viola “Silver Gem” has silvery leaves with purple undersides. It grows larger but rarely reseeds. Also consider *Carex plantaginea*, with its puckered yellow-green leaves. If nothing seems to thrive in dry shade under pines or in the roots of a maple, *Viola striata*, with its white blooms and *Carex laxiculmus*, with bluish leaves will seed and fill in the area. Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) will also work. All these choices are deer resistant.

Coneflowers (*Echinacea* and *Rudbeckia fulgida*) are both long flowering. Leave the seed heads over winter to provide food for birds, cover for stem nesting bees and to protect the crown from rot. These are good choices for a sunny area that is moving toward part-sun.

Grasses can control erosion and thrive in poor soil on dry slopes. Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) provides larvae food and winter seed for birds. For a large erosion problem, Wild Oats (*Chasmanthium latifolium*) will reseed to cover the area. Love grass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*) is a short ground cover until it seeds in a foot-high haze of pink. All are deer resistant.

Our plant experts will be available at the sale to help you find the perfect plants to solve all your garden problems.

Read more articles at www.DelNature.org/NativePlantSale



Echinacea purpurea (p 12)



Polystichum acrostichoides (p 6)



Leucothoe



Vaccinium corymbosum (p 25)