



BEESON'S
McHenry County
Nursery, Inc.

Nursery News

December 2007 - Research & Development

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Greening Winter



No matter one's faith, we all enjoy the decorations that are symbols of religious and cultural holidays celebrated around the winter solstice - the shortest day and longest night of the year in the northern hemisphere.

For people, this usually means more time spent indoors, but when we do venture out, it's nice to have our surroundings spruced up with, well...spruce! and other plants. In ancient times, winter plant decor helped make homes festive as well as warding off evil spirits and illness. In modern times we can at least be sure colorful boughs and berries will ward off some of the doldrums.



In early cultures around the world, people have celebrated this time of darkness with festive seasonal plants - evergreen boughs especially, as well as cherry, hawthorn and holly. These ancient cultures believed that winter came because the sun god had become sick or weak. The winter solstice was celebrated as the turning point where the sun god would start to get healthy again. To celebrate, homes were filled with evergreens, which symbolized life, health, and the coming green plants of spring and summer.

It has been known for some time that landscaping the urban and suburban environment improves social and individual interactions in a community as well as transforming public places into good places for plants. We generally focus on planting and improving our surroundings during the three growing seasons of the year, when nature provides a good part of the beauty for us without our having to lift a finger (or a shovel).



But what about those long winter months where trees are only skeletons of their outer-selves and the mid-western landscape is drab, dull and gray-brown? Turning an eye toward beautifying buildings and public places in the winter is a practice on which we in the plant business could definitely improve. Many plants have striking winter interest alone and in contrast with others. We don't have to get stuck in a rut of grey-brown deciduous plants and needle-evergreens.

Today holiday decorations include homemade ornaments, apples, nuts, marzipan, popcorn, and berries. We also see colorful electric lights, candles, tinsel and bows, glass and plastic ornaments, lawn decorations and huge air and light filled characters.

In this country of many cultures, religions, and traditions, we celebrate different holidays for different reasons around this time of year. The one thing we all celebrate in common is life, which is represented by the evergreen plants in our decorations, vibrant green reminders of the persistence and beauty of life through the dark and cold times.

Think of every attribute of a plant:

- twigs
- needles
- bark
- fruit
- cones
- and all the elements of art
- line
- form
- texture
- color
- shape



as part of your plant palette and winter becomes a lively, interesting and colorful season in the landscape.



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	LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	DESCRIPTION
BARK	Betula allegheniensis	Birch Yellow	Yellow brown to red brown stems and peeling bark with a pleasing winter form.
	Betula nigra	Birch River	Exfoliating reddish-brown bark makes this native a welcome sight in winter.
	Betula Madison	Birch White Satin	Satiny white bark glows on a sunny winter day.
	Hydrangea quercifolia	Oakleaf Hydrangea	Showy exfoliating cinnamon brown bark.



	LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	DESCRIPTION
BERRIES	Aronia arbutifolia	Chokeberry Red	Multi-stemmed shrub retains glossy red fruit into the winter.
	Aronia arbutifolia 'Brilliantissima'	Chokeberry Red Brilliantissima	Large glossy berries persist into early winter.
	Aronia melanocarpa elata	Chokeberry Glossy Black	Purplish black fruit well into winter.
	Aronia melanocarpa Iroquois Beauty™	Chokeberry Black Iroquois Beauty™	
	Cotoneaster apiculata	Cotoneaster Cranberry	A densely mounded shrub with intertwining branches. Abundant and persistent large, bright red fruit.
	Ilex	Holly	Abundant and persistent fruits are produced on female plants, if a male plant is near. Bright red berries remain on branches well into winter.
	Ilex verticillata Berry Heavy	Holly Berry Heavy	Beautiful winter appeal. Huge amounts of berries.
	Ilex verticillata 'Red Sprite'	Holly Red Sprite	Compact version of Ilex verticillata with bright red berries.
	Ilex verticillata 'Winter Red®'	Holly Winter Red®	Profuse and persistent red fruits are the outstanding landscape feature of this plant.
	Myrica pensylvanica	Bayberry Northern	A deciduous to semi-evergreen shrub, can hold its leathery leaves through winter in some areas. Female plants bear clusters of waxy gray-blue berries along the stems. Berries are fragrant and used in making bayberry candles.



	LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	DESCRIPTION
BRANCHES/STEMS	Cornus	Dogwood	Bright vertical stems in shades of red, orange or yellow increase in intensity throughout the winter. Young stems have the brightest colors.
	Cornus alba 'Sibirica'	Dogwood Coral	An even growing red-stemmed dogwood.
	Cornus alternifolia	Dogwood Pagoda	Tiered purple branches.
	Cornus racemosa	Dogwood Gray	Good fall and winter effect when bluish-white berries and stunning reddish-pink pedicels appear against a background of gray stems.
	Cornus sericea 'Allemans Compact'	Dogwood Allemans Compact	Compact form with red winter stems.
	Cornus sericea 'Isanti'	Dogwood Isanti	This compact plant is mound shaped with red stems.
	Euonymus alatus	Burning Bush	The snow covered corky winged branches on this shrub are attractive in winter.
	Salix discolor	Willow Pussy	Stout deep purplish-brown stems.
	Salix purpurea 'Nana'	Willow Dwarf Arctic Blue	Rounded, dense, finely branched shrub with purplish winter branches.

Inquiries or more information is available by contacting **McHenry County Nursery Green Tech** Mary McClelland
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LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	DESCRIPTION
Buxus	Boxwood	Compact evergreen shrubs in various shades of glossy green and shapes from rounded to upright.
Buxus Chicagoland Green®	Boxwood Chicagoland Green®	A dense broad oval growth habit with glossy green foliage. A very hardy and uniform growth habit makes this variety an excellent choice for formal winter combinations.
Buxus 'Green Mountain'®	Boxwood Green Mountain®	This winter hardy and urban tolerant Boxwood is adaptable to many situations. Slow growing upright plant with glossy dark green leaves.
Buxus microphylla 'Wintergreen'	Boxwood Wintergreen	Lovely light green foliage, perfect splash of color for colder climates.
Buxus Northern Charm™	Boxwood Northern Charm™	Dark blueish-green foliage in winter, compact rounded form.
Juniperus chinensis 'Sea Green'	Juniper Sea Green	Compact spreader with arching branches and mint green foliage.
Picea abies	Spruce Norway	Pyramidal with pendulous branches, becoming quite graceful with maturity. Young, bright green needles change to lustrous dark green with age.
Picea glauca 'Densata'	Spruce Black Hills	Uniformly dense pyramidal evergreen in youth, becomes a very dense conical shaped ornamental in maturity.
Picea pungens	Spruce Colorado Green	Needles are shades of green and blue.
Picea pungens glauca	Spruce Colorado Blue	One of the most striking conifers in color and habit. Needles are various shades of blue.
Pinus cembra	Pine Swiss Stone	A picturesque and hardy pine with lustrous dark green needles. Has a narrow, densely columnar outline in youth, that becomes more open and spreading when mature.
Pinus mugo mughus	Pine Mugo	Low mounding form of pine. Natural and sheared forms. Very rugged and hardy.
Pinus nigra	Pine Austrian	Lustrous dark green foliage.
Pinus ponderosa	Pine Ponderosa	Long, dark green needles are densely spaced on the branches. Narrow pyramidal shape becomes cylindrical with age.
Pinus strobus	Pine White	Soft looking, symmetrical, pyramidal pine. Full and lush with light blue-green foliage.
Pinus sylvestris	Pine Scotch	Hardy and rapid grower when young.
Pseudotsuga menziesii	Fir Douglas	An open-spired pyramidal with medium green needles.
Abies concolor	Fir White	Rich blue-green needles hold well.
Taxus	Yews	Dense dark green glossy evergreen leaves in various shades and habits
Taxus cuspidata	Yew Spreading Japanese	Versatile Evergreen that thrives anywhere and tolerates urban conditions, shady areas, and heavy pruning.
Taxus x media Dark Green Spreader	Yew Dark Green Spreader	Dark green 3/4" needles stay green all winter. A dense growing spreader. The most winter hardy dense yew available
Taxus x media Blue John	Yew Blue John	Compact dark green-blue, thick needles. Low growing habit. Very attractive winter color.
Taxus x media 'Densifomis'	Yew Dense	Dense and shrub-like form. Needles bright green needles. Excellent foundation plant for deep rich color.
Taxus x media 'Hicksii'	Yew Hicks	Upright yew with deep green needles and red fruit in the fall. Very hardy columnar type.
Thuja	Arborvitae	Arborvitae provide color and structure throughout the winter months. Cultivars come in many shapes and shades of green. Soft textured but dense evergreen foliage.
Thuja occidentalis 'Emerald'	Arborvitae Emerald	Cold hardy to -40 degrees. Does not discolor in winter. Foliage is a bright emerald green. Compact pyramidal growth habit has a formal appearance.
Thuja occidentalis 'Holmstrup'	Arborvitae Holmstrup	Extremely compact upright plant. Bushy bright green textured foliage.
Thuja occidentalis 'Little Gem'	Arborvitae Little Gem	Dwarf, dense, round form.
Thuja occidentalis 'Nigra'	Arborvitae Dark Green	Pyramidal form with dark green foliage that lasts throughout the winter.
Thuja occidentalis 'Pyramidalis'	Arborvitae Pyramidal	Narrow pyramidal, formal in outline with bright green, soft textured foliage.
Thuja occidentalis 'Techny'	Arborvitae Mission Techny	Excellent dark green foliage year round. Extremely dense and heavy, perfect for an instant hedge.
Thuja occidentalis Tiny Tim	Arborvitae Tiny Tim	Dense globe shape. Compact, slow growing evergreen.
Thuja occidentalis 'Woodwardii'	Arborvitae Woodward	A very uniform, naturally globe-shaped arborvitae that never needs trimming, a neat compact shape.

FOLIAGE (cont.)

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