



# Trumpet Vine

Knowledge for the Community from Loudoun County Master Gardeners

*Fall 2010*

Volume VI, Issue 4 [www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org](http://www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org)

## LOUDOUN COUNTY MASTER GARDENER MONTHLY MEETINGS

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
UNLESS NOTED, MEETINGS ARE HELD AT  
THE VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
OFFICE, 30B CATOCTIN CIRCLE SE,  
LEESBURG, AT 7PM

Mark Your Calendar:  
Second Annual Gardening  
Symposium will be Held in the  
Month of March, 2011. Watch for  
Updates!

October 7: *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle*  
with Tony Hayes. Tony Hayes has  
been the Recycling Specialist for  
Loudoun County since 2000. Prior  
to that he worked at the National  
Association of Counties as a  
Research Associate on recycling  
and pollution prevention. He  
began his career in this field in  
1993 as a recycling coordinator  
for the City of Martinsburg, WV.  
Loudoun County recycles tons of  
materials every year. Tony Hayes  
will tell the fascinating story of  
what happens to it.

Nov. 4: *Holiday Arrangements  
Demonstration*, Darcy Justin,  
Master Gardener. With over 20  
years of design experience, Darcy  
brings her bold creative approach  
to all aspects of floral and garden  
design. She has taught floral  
design, gardening and garden  
design principals for the National  
Cathedral, Fairfax County Parks  
and Recreation, Loudoun County  
Parks Authority, workshops for  
garden centers, master gardeners  
groups, garden clubs, and special  
interest groups.

## Loudoun County Master Gardeners in the News

In August, the theft of over one hundred pounds of apples and pears from the Loudoun County Master Gardener Demonstration Garden at Ida Lee Park

brought focus to the LCMG Program. So full of fruit, the trees were hanging to the ground. Master Gardeners had very carefully pruned and organically maintained the trees for optimal fruit production. It was going to be a banner year. All produce from the Demonstration Garden is grown organically for donation to Interfaith Relief



(see below). The Demo Garden is a teaching and learning garden, and as such, our gardeners work many hours to ensure crop yield and test variety. New cultivars are experimented with as well as old fashioned favorites planted for donation. The influx of fresh fruit and vegetable is a wonderful addition to Interfaith Relief's pantry of canned goods. It was a shame to lose such a precious bounty. *(read more about the Demo Garden later in this issue)*

## Interfaith Relief

*"Our Mission Is To Feed the Hungry In Loudoun County"*

Established in 1991, Loudoun Interfaith Relief is the largest food pantry in the county, providing food to prepare three nutritious meals a day for families in need. According to their website, Fiscal Year ending June 2010 served 66,789 individuals, an increase of 43% from the previous year. Interfaith Relief provides services to many groups including: the working poor, the unemployed, senior or sick individuals, and the homeless.

Located near the Leesburg Executive Airport on Miller Drive, Interfaith is reachable by Virginia Regional Transit. Food is distributed Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturdays from 10am until 12:45pm, and Tuesday/Thursday evenings by appointment (call 703/777 5911).

For information on how you can help, please visit their website at:  
<http://www.interfaithrelief.org/>

## **Have You Thought About Becoming a Master Gardener?**

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Loudoun County Master Gardeners (LCMG) are gearing up for the Class of 2011! If this is something you would be interested in, please contact us as registration is now underway. The deadline to register is November 19. This year we are offering a \$200 Earlybird Registration (received by November 1, 2010) or \$225 for applications received after November 1, 2010.

The LCMG training program trains Volunteers to assist the Urban Horticulturalist in providing service and educational programs to Loudoun homeowners. Persons interested in joining the LCMG program do not have to be experienced gardeners. The one characteristic all Master Gardener Volunteers (MGVs) have in common is a desire to give back to or contribute to their community. To join the program, you must complete and return an application form to the Extension Office (form can be found on-line at <http://www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org/becomeanmg.htm>).

Training space limits the number of students accepted to 30. Applicants are personally interviewed by current MGVs and Extension personnel before being accepted into the program - this helps us all make sure that the program requirements are understood before a commitment is made.

Your commitment begins with classroom training which runs from February 1st through April 28th. Classes meet every Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 9am until noon, in the Extension Office in Leesburg. It is expected that trainees attend each and every class. The classes follow the Loudoun County School calendar, so breaks are scheduled accordingly.

Classes are taught by industry professionals, Loudoun County's Urban Horticulturalist, and qualified Master Gardeners. There are over 25 classes and labs scheduled for the 2011 class. The material covered ranges from Soils, Botany, Turf, Fruiting plants, Pruning, Landscape Design, and Vegetable Gardening. If this sounds overwhelming, it's not. The instructors are clear, the material is wonderful, and even if you are lacking a true green thumb, this is a place to learn some real basics about our land and use of it.

Now that the classroom section of the commitment has been addressed, what about the rest? We have a 75 hour internship requirement! Wow--75 hours sounds like a lot but the hours are broken up into three areas of our mission. Twenty five hours are required as service on the "Helpline" and at plant clinics, where you would be paired with tenured MGVs. So don't worry, you won't be dispensing advice without a touchstone. Twenty five hours are required working in our Demonstration Garden at Ida Lee Park. If you are not physically capable of doing gardening chores, there are other tasks that can be accomplished. Lastly, 25 hours of "Other" services - such as working the booth at the Leesburg Flower and Garden Show and other special events, or perhaps helping write articles for this publication!

At the end of the year, with all hours satisfied, Interns are certified as a Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Volunteer. After this first year, to maintain status as an MGV, you must complete 25 hours of volunteer work and 8 hours of continuing education (an easy requirement just by attending the monthly Association Meetings!)

Are you ready for the call of the Garden? Come become a Loudoun County Master Gardener!

**Linda Furr, Master Gardener, Training Team Leader**

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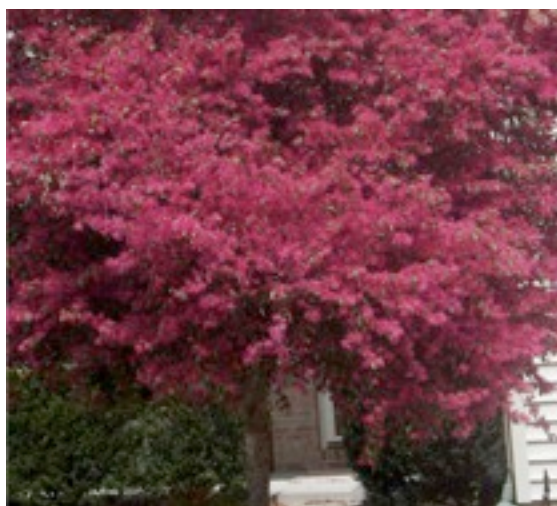
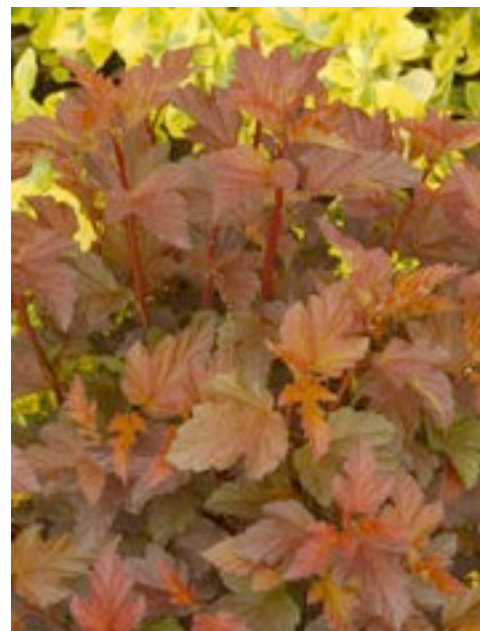
## Fall Color

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### Fall Color

Check out these beauties for fall color....I'm so excited because I just bought a house with a bigger yard. Which means.....I can have ALL of these.

**Ninebark - Coppertina™**, *Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Minda' PPAF, is a spectacular new addition to the ninebark family of native shrubs. It is a lovely plant with orange-copper foliage in the spring, and as the foliage matures in summer, it turns a rich red. As with other ninebark, it blooms in summer, sporting white button-like blooms which contrast wonderfully with the foliage. This ninebark is also noted for its attractive peeling bark and bright red seed capsules in autumn. Coppertina has superior branching and an attractive, bushy habit. It is a useful landscape plant that grows 7 to 8 feet in height. Fast growing and adaptable, it provides season-long color to either the home garden or commercial landscape. Coppertina needs moderate moisture, but can tolerate dry conditions once established; prefers full sun.



**'Zhuzhou' Loropetalum** produces an abundance of vibrant pink, witch hazel-like, fringy flowers in Spring, sporadically during Summer, and again in Fall. The flowers contrast wonderfully with the blackish-maroon foliage. An easy to grow, low maintenance shrub, useful as a tall hedge or screen, or as a tree-form specimen, accent or espalier (grown against a wall) in landscape beds and foundation plantings. One of the most cold hardy loropetalums.

**Cornus Arctic Sun™**, Looking for fall and winter interest? This wonderful shrub has golden yellow and peachy orange foliage in the fall and when the foliage falls off – you get the beautiful display shown in the picture of yellow stems with red tips. It's a spectacular show in the winter sunlight. Arctic Sun is a breakthrough variety as it only reaches 3-4 feet in height versus the standard 8-10 feet of other Cornus. Arctic Sun™ can be used as a cut stem for holiday arrangements or for season long color indoors. Prune old stems to the ground in spring. Plant is considered deer resistant.







**Heatwave Glimmer™ Sage** - Evergreen in zones 6-9, this lovely cream selection has a longer bloom time and quickly reblooms from spring until frost; flowering may be year round in mild climates. Bred for compact, rounded habit and disease resistance, this is a must for drought tolerant gardens, perennial borders and patio containers. Full sun; prefers well-draining soil. Fast growing, rounded, compact plant; 30 inches tall by 36 inches wide.

**Viburnum dilatatum- CARDINAL CANDY™** has improved hardiness compared to other dilatatum varieties with bright red, abundant berries making for a stunning display in the fall. The plant itself has a nice, well-branched

habit, and fits nicely into the landscape. Berries are not edible by humans. Other points listed are: attracts birds, deer resistant, drought tolerant, low maintenance and winter interest.

**Size:** 5-6 feet tall, 3-4 feet wide

**Exposure:** Full sun to partial shade

**Soil:** Best in moist, slightly acidic soil. Will do well in higher pH soils, but does tolerate a wide range of soil.

**Pruning:** Best if done immediately after flowering. Buds form summer prior to blooms.



To read more: [http://www.colorchoiceplants.com/cardinal\\_candy.htm#ixzz0yhbmcn65](http://www.colorchoiceplants.com/cardinal_candy.htm#ixzz0yhbmcn65)



**Symphoricarpos 'Kordes'** - After a modest show of tiny greenish-white flowers in summer, in September come the perfectly outrageous clusters of vivid deep purple and pink berries that linger on the long stems into late fall or early winter. The 5'-tall rounded hybrid shrub, with long dark green leaves, is a good choice for the sloping banks of a pond or river, providing erosion control in poor soil conditions. For full sun or part shade in average soil.

**Master Gardener Becky Phillips**

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## **Fall—A Good Time to Reassess Your Yard**

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Fall is the perfect time to plant perennials, trees and shrubs. The cooler temperatures and with some luck, the rainfall, allow new plants to get some root growth established before winter sets in. Some plants continue to expand their root systems throughout the winter. While the Garden Centers overflow with plants in the spring, the fall is really the best time to plant. Those spring plantings require close attention and frequent watering throughout the summer, especially a very hot one like we just experienced. Fall plantings have about 8 months to get established before the full assault of summer begins.

Lawns also require attention in the fall. This is the season to over seed, fertilize if you need to, thatch, aerate and continue to water and mow.

So there's no getting around fall yard work! This is the perfect time to step back and reassess. What do you want from your yard? Is your yard functional? Is it an asset? Are you benefiting from all the work that you put into it? Is your yard balanced?

### **Grass is Not “Green”**

Grass is not environmentally beneficial. The type of grass we strive to have is native to England and northern France. These countries are on the same latitude as Nova Scotia - cool and damp - about an inch of rain a week. (Don't be fooled, Kentucky Bluegrass is not native to Kentucky!) In order to keep grass alive during our hot dry Virginia summers we have to water and water with scarce, expensive water. Our soil is naturally acidic so we add lime and lots of other fertilizers that contain nitrogen and phosphorus that run off into our streams and rivers and eventually cause huge dead zones in the Chesapeake Bay. Homeowners overuse and misuse pesticides which make the grass potentially hazardous and compound the runoff problem.

The roots of healthy turf grass are so dense that water cannot soak into the ground. Lawns act more like sidewalks and roads, limiting ground water infiltration, and increasing runoff and flooding.

Then there's the lawn mower. We water and fertilize the grass so that it grows faster and then we have to use noisy, polluting, gas burning mowers to cut the grass.

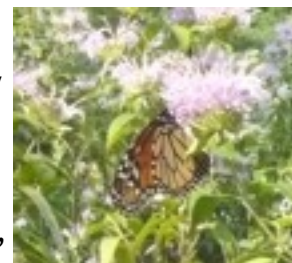
Finally the lawn adds nothing to the ecology. It provides neither food nor habitat for wildlife – nothing for the bees, butterflies or birds. A healthy lawn is a sterile monoculture.

### **Grass—Use It or Lose It**

Grass has a function. It creates a place to play and a place for outdoor entertainment. Children need space to run, play ball, and roll around (avoid the use of pesticides where children and pets come in contact with the grass). Assess whether your entire lawn is being used. Are there spots where the grass really doesn't want to grow? An area needs at least 6 hours of sun for grass to thrive. Are there areas where the lawn isn't serving a function - it's just there because it's always been there? Consider replacing the areas of your lawn that are not actively benefiting you and your family with native trees, shrubs and plants. The idea is not to do away with the lawn but to design and manage it to reduce its present damage to the environment.

## The Benefits of Naturalized Areas

Areas planted with native trees and shrubs do surprisingly well with very little effort on your part. Once they are established they require less water and little or no fertilizer. Native plants like our acidic clay soil as is. A thick stand of native perennials choke out the weeds and the area becomes virtually care free. Areas covered with native plants and trees, decaying leaves and wood chips acts like a sponge; rain can percolate down to deep roots and the aquifers below. Storm runoff is significantly decreased and the rain water stays where it's needed. Native plants also provide food for pollinators and birds. At right is a photo taken locally of a monarch on blue bee balm. Native plants provide pollen for hummingbirds, bees and butterflies and seeds for such birds as golden finch.



## Planning to Go Native

Identify the areas that you want to keep. Get to know the areas that you plan to replace. How much shade does it get, at what times of the day? When is it sunny? Is the soil dry or moist? Is it flat or on a grade? Research the native plants that do well in your conditions. A very good source of information is *Native Plants for Wildlife Habitat and Conservation Landscaping*, <http://www.nps.gov/plants/pubs/chesapeake/>

Draw up a plan that you can implement at your convenience over the next three to five years to reduce the size of your lawn and increase the areas that are naturalized with native trees, shrubs and plants. You may want to take advantage of a full sun area by planting a native flower bed. Consider color, height and flowering time for the best effect. Another option is to mitigate the full sun with some trees. Many plants that grow in full sun also appreciate partial shade. Two examples of trees that will become tall, are relatively fast growing, provide food for wildlife and are hospitable to plants growing under them are tulip trees, *Liriodendron tulipifera* and willow oaks, *Quercus phellos*. There are many smaller trees that will also provide shade as well as wildlife benefit. Flowering dogwood, *Cornus florida*, river birch, *Betula nigra* and Washington hawthorn, *Crataegus phaenopyrum* are attractive smaller trees with high wildlife value.

The following are some native plants to consider:

Sunny Spot Plants	Partial Shade Lovers	Shrubs
Butterfly weed	Cardinal flower	American beautyberry
Milkweed	Great blue lobelia	Buttonbush
Purple cone flower	Mistflower	Sweet pepperbush
Orange coneflower	Goldenrod	Inkberry holly
Wild Blue Indigo	Black-eyed Susan	Winterberry holly
Coreopsis (tickseed)	Oxeye sunflower	Black or Red chokeberry
Swamp sunflower	Red and blue bee balm	Red elderberry
Gayfeather	Green and gold	Highbush blueberry
Goldenrod	Foamflower	Arrowwood viburnum
Asters	Wild blue phlox	Black haw viburnum
New York ironweed	Wild columbine	Sumac

**Carol Ivory, Master Gardener**



## Lessons Learned at the Demo Garden

Whether you live in a sprawling landscape in the mountains or in suburbia with curbs, we have all learned a thing or two while we garden. What worked? What didn't? Would you try it again? The Loudoun County Master Gardeners have tended to a Demonstration Garden at Ida Lee Park in Leesburg since 1992 and we learn something every year. One of our goals at the garden is to demonstrate the many facets of organic gardening to the community for educational purposes. We demonstrate, we learn, we educate. In 2009 we chronicled 9 pages of things we learned! This article outlines a couple of them; maybe they will help you in your gardening adventures.

**Fruit trees:** In 1998, 5 fruit trees (3 apple, 2 pear) were planted near the south end of the garden. At the time, the area was very sunny and the dwarf variety trees were planted with plenty of room between them. As the garden expanded and more areas were added to the south, the shade started creeping in. Three pine trees continue to grow and shade the area. Ground covers were also planted around the tree bases throughout the years. Last year, the shade and proximity of the trees to each other stifled air flow. The mature trees were also too close together. The ground covers began to harbor diseases and the trees began to suffer from fire blight and cedar apple rust.

As a result, a regimented organic spray schedule was set up to eliminate the diseases and insects. Winter dormant oil, organic fungicide and Surround spray were used. The ground covers were removed from the tree trunks to the tree drip line to eliminate voles and other air born diseases. This spring, we cut down one tree and severely pruned back another (for use in grafting demos) to add air circulation. The remaining trees produced quite a bit of fruit this year but it took a great effort! Worth noting however, it is very difficult to maintain a spraying schedule due to good old Mother Nature! And, unfortunately, the fire blight came back.



**Tomatoes:** In 2009, we had a wet and cold spring after planting on May 13th. After growth began, the leaves appeared cupped and the plants were losing their bottom leaves to what appeared to be Early Blight. After much discussion, copper dust was applied. This is approved for organic gardening but in some cases it can be toxic. Compost tea was also sprayed on the leaves. The conditions improved after the dusting but, in retrospect, some of what was encountered may have been leaf roll caused by weather conditions, which will

improve on its own. Leaf roll develops with periods of cool, rainy weather. It causes the lower leaves to roll upward and become thick and leathery. It doesn't affect the plant growth or fruit production and no treatment is really necessary.

For further learning, please enjoy our document of Lessons Learned from 2007, 08 and 09 at [www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org/demogarden.htm](http://www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org/demogarden.htm). Once at the website, scroll down to the bottom of the page.

**Master Gardener Barb Bailly**

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## Why Vine Covered Trees are Not Desirable

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Luckily, the first arborist who visited my farm when we bought it told me that vines growing on trees can cause damage and death to trees. Several of my older trees had trunks that were covered in English ivy, an invasive non-native. The arborist removed the vines by cutting the vines completely around the trunk, but even carefully pulling out of the little tendrils of the ivy still caused some damage to the trunk bark. Ivy should be cut again at the base of the tree and all vines cleared away from the tree. It is best to wait until the vines above the cut die and have dried to make them easier to remove from the bark. If any ivy remains near the tree, watch for regrowth.

Although the ivy vine had not yet grown into the canopy of my trees (which smothers the tree by preventing sun from reaching the leaves and preventing photosynthesis) the arborist felt certain that the trees would decline more rapidly because of the vines. And, yes, unfortunately those trees have declined more rapidly although it has been thirteen years since the ivy was removed, and some trees will need to be removed from the property.

Ivy does not mature until it grows vertically when it will produce berries and multiply throughout neighboring forest trees. The photo to the right shows the leaves of mature ivy that have enveloped a tree. The leaves have a different appearance than the immature ivy that creeps along the ground. Both the berries and the leaves of English ivy are poisonous to humans. However birds eat the berries and spread the seeds.



The added weight of vines on trees is devastating especially in wind and ice. It can cause large limbs to break and entire trees to go over.

Ivy covering a tree trunk keeps the trunk wet under the vines. This causes rot, girdling and other types of damage that will eventually kill the tree.

English ivy is an aggressive spreader and will soon be on the neighbors' trees and into open forest property. English ivy also can carry pathogens that cause bacterial leaf scorch that afflicts shade trees. Bacterial leaf scorch spreads systemically and causes the slow decline and death of a tree.

To the eyes of many, the vines look beautiful growing over the trunks of trees and add a dimension of "old, stately and elegant," but it's quite likely that the vines will eventually kill the tree. While esteemed colleges and other venerable institutions describe and glorify their "ivy covered walls" the clinging tendrils of the vines are most likely eroding some housing materials, especially ruining finishes of window frames, roof eaves, siding and brick or stone walls.

These invasive vines can change the forest into dense monocultures and crowd out native plants including wildflowers, shrubs and young trees, then compete with the diverse plants needed for food and shelter for birds and other wildlife. Some of these culprits besides English ivy are Porcelain Berry, Oriental Bittersweet, Japanese Honey Suckle, Periwinkle, Climbing Euonymus (also called winter creeper) and Mile-A-Minute.

**Jean Ann Feneis, Master Gardener Tree Steward**



## Choosing Trees for Fall Color

My favorite time of year in Virginia is without a doubt autumn. Spring is a delight, with flowering trees and shrubs, beguiling bulbs poking through the hard clay soil, and days of bright blue skies before the summer humidity muddies the air (my least favorite time of year). But after residing most of my life in the Southwest where a majority of the fall colors are varying hues of yellow, the multicolored leaves of this region take my breath away.

The intensity of autumn leaves can vary from year to year, some years being more spectacular than others. Several factors affect fall leaf color including cool evening temperatures, shortening day length, moisture, site location, and pigments in the leaf cells. Bright sunny days followed by extended periods of nighttime temperatures below 45° but above freezing makes for the showiest spectrum of color. [www.arboday.org/shopping/trees/why-leaves-change](http://www.arboday.org/shopping/trees/why-leaves-change)

As many of us know, autumn is the prime time for planting trees and shrubs, giving the roots time to establish before winter arrives. If showy fall leaves are a priority when choosing a tree, there are many native and non-invasive exotics that can fill the bill here in Loudoun County (USDA Zones 6a-7b, depending on location).

### Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*)

A great, reliable tree that makes a big statement in fall, sugar maple offers gorgeous red, orange, and/or yellow end-of-the-season leaves.

**Growing conditions:** sun to shade; moist, well-drained soil (MWDS)

**Size:** 60 to 75' tall at maturity; spread 2/3's the height

**Zones:** 4 - 8

**Native to North America:** yes



### Black Gum/Black Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*)

Known for its incredible fall foliage, the Black Tupelo can contain many shades on the same branch. Frequent colors seen on the leaves of this autumn beauty include yellow, orange, bright red, purple, and scarlet. Bird friendly.

**Growing conditions:** full sun to part shade; prefers slightly acid soil and MWDS, but will tolerate dry or wet sites

**Size:** 30 to 50' tall at maturity; spread of 20 to 30'

**Zones:** 4 - 9

**Native to North America:** yes

### Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)

Slow-growing ginkgo adds grace to the landscape. Its fan-shaped leaves are among the most elegant of any tree. In autumn, they show breathtaking shades of luminous golden yellow. And when leaf-drop occurs, often it is the entire tree—overnight!

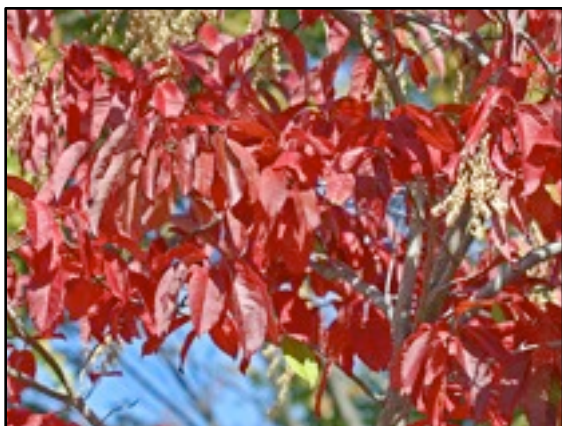
**Growing conditions:** prefers full sun and sandy soil; MWDS

**Size:** 50 - 80' tall at maturity; spread greatly variable

**Zones:** 4 - 9

**Native to North America:** no





## Sourwood/Lily-of-the-Valley-Tree (*Oxydendrum arboreum*)

The sourwood is a great year-round tree with its white fragrant flowers in early summer. But its fall leaves are what gets it on this list. Each autumn the rich green leavesturn to yellow, red, or even purple.

**Growing conditions:** full sun to part shade (better color in full sun); prefers MWDS, but will tolerate dry soil

**Size:** 20 - 30' in height at maturity; equal spread

**Zones:** 5 - 9

**Native to North America:** yes

## Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)\*

Dogwoods are a true four-season tree, providing beautiful blooms in the spring, glossy deep green leaves throughout the summer, wonderful fall color, and red berries for early winter.

**Growing conditions:** prefer partly shady locales; MWDS

**Size:** 20 - 40' in height at maturity; equal/greater spread

**Zones:** 5 - 8

**Native to North America:** yes

\*The Stellar® Series Dogwoods (a cross between *C. florida* and *C. kousa*) might be considered to avoid anthracnose.



## Japanese Stewartia (*Stewartia pseudocamellia*)

Again, this tree is beautiful throughout the year, having late-summer white camellia-like flowers. In fall, the leaves turn festive shades of orange, yellow, and red.

**Growing conditions:** full sun to part shade; slightly acid MWDS

**Size:** 20 - 40' in height at maturity; slightly less spread

**Zones:** (4)5 - 7

**Native to North America:** no

There are many more colorful fall trees, including a number of the Maples, such as **Red Maple** (*Acer rubrum*), **Amur Maple** (*Acer ginnala*) and **Japanese Maples** (*Acer palmatum*); many in the **Cherry** family (*Prunus* spp.), our native **Redbud** (*Cercis canadensis*), most of the **Birches** (*Betula* spp.), and numerous **Viburnum** (*Viburnum* spp.). A good resource list can be found at:

[www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/factsheets/trees-new/treelists/fallcolor.html](http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/consumer/factsheets/trees-new/treelists/fallcolor.html)

**Edye Clark, Master Gardener and Tree Steward**

\*\*Tree information and photos came from the Arbor Day (arborday.org) and Better Homes and Gardens (bhg.com) websites. Info also taken from Manual of Woody Landscape Plants by Michael A. Dirr.



## Pansies, Violas, Johnny Jump-ups Oh My!

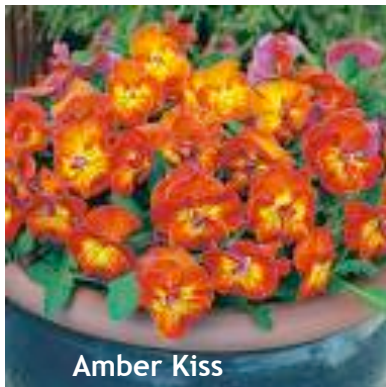


I love pansies and when asked to write an article on the differences between Pansies, Johnny Jump-ups and Violas - I thought...what fun. Well, little did I know how much information was out there! Wikipedia is a great place to start to learn about the history of the plants and some great folklore and fun facts are there. About.com also has a great article that describes the differences between them. The categories include:

- ❖ Sweet Violets - Most of today's violas are derived from *Viola odorata*, the Sweet Violet. Sweet violets are true perennials. You'll stumble on them unexpectedly in fields and lawns and recognize them at once by their heady, sweet scent and deep violet color.
- ❖ Garden Violas - The violas cultivated for garden use are either:
  - \* *Viola tricolor* / **Johnny-Jump-Up** - a self-seeding perennial with nickel-sized flowers marked with purple, yellow and white.
  - \* *Viola cornuta* / **Tufted or Horned Violets** - Spreading perennials with a rosette of leaves topped by 1 ½ inch flowers in a variety of colors with rays or lines in a deeper or contrasting shade. *V. cornuta* may even have a slight scent. The plants can get 6 - 10 inches tall.
  - \* *Viola wittrockiana* / **Garden Pansy** - A short-lived perennial with larger flowers than its cousins above. The plant grows about 8 inches tall and has 2 - 3 inches flowers that can be single colored or patterned. These are usually grown as annuals.

For the whole article, visit <http://gardening.about.com/od/plantprofiles/a/Violas.htm>. And since I can't cover it all, I decided to share some amazing varieties of each. Enjoy!

First up, **Johnny Jump -ups**, also know as Heartsease. Here are some great new varieties.



Amber Kiss

Beautiful orangey colors are shown with Amber Kiss at the left. Tiger's Eye at the right is aptly named after the gemstone.

And my all time favorite, that I found in NC several years ago but haven't been able to find since: Velour Frosted Chocolate. Who can resist chocolate?



Tiger's Eye

### Next up - Pansies!



To the left is a typical pansy flower but why not explore your options? How about a Black Pansy? Put your pumpkins in a bed of these little guys for a great effect this October.







Another Pansy I have grown with great luck and lots of comments from passersby is Frizzle Sizzle, pictured at the left. It has a great range of colors if you can't make up your mind which color you want!

And some of the most amazing colors I have found have been with the Antique Shades varieties - two of which are pictured here.



## And Finally - Violas!



And last, we have the violas - some people consider them weeds - my mother digs them up and moves them to save them. I much prefer them to grass! And if you can find the ones with a fragrance? You are fortunate indeed. Below are some wonderful pictures of sweet violets in the gardens at [Rose Cottage Gardens and Farm](#). If you visit the link you will enjoy a

wonderful blog entry on violas, jellies and tea.



Well - I hope I have given you some inspiration and some great places to visit and dream about. Now you can plant in your garden this fall!

**Master Gardener Becky Philips**

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## Wild Edibles - Chicory

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Chicory: *Chicorium intybus*  
Parts used: root and leaves

Summer is well under way. As we ramble down highways and quieter roads we can see many roadside plants in bloom. Chicory is one such plant that easily captures our eye with its beautiful star-like petals of blue.

Tender leaves can be chopped and used in salads.

Tea from root is often used in coffee-like beverages including dandelion root because it does not contain caffeine. The root is also used to mellow coffee.

In reviewing the literature concerning chicory uses and effects it seems it has an ability to temper the caffeine effects of coffee which is why it has been mixed with coffee. It is consumed in large amounts in many parts of the world with little or no side effects.

Cautions: It is never wise to gather plants near roads. The ground is polluted with exhaust fumes and tars. However, if you notice chicory at the edges of gardens and forests try tender leaves in salad. Chop like you would dandelion greens.

Recipe: gather chicory leaves, garlic, olive oil, salt and pepper.

Wash chicory leaves. Plunge into boiling water, cook 5 minutes and drain. If leaf is too bitter, then repeat procedure. Drain well. Heat olive oil and add chopped garlic. Add chicory and cook only long enough to heat through. Add salt and pepper to taste. (From A City Herbal by Maida Silverman)

Roots: can be gathered in late summer. Wash, chop and let dry. This may take a few days depending on humidity. Cut into smaller pieces and place on a cookie sheet in 300 degree oven. Heat roots until brittle and brown. You can store this way or put in coffee grinder. When ground, store in tightly closed glass jar.

Add one tablespoon per 4 tablespoons coffee or try 1-3 teaspoons for single cup by itself. Chicory root brew can be enjoyed hot or cold.

Iced Chicory anyone?

**Master Gardener Judith Dreyer, MS, BSN**

## Harvest Time: Three Sisters Soup

Corn, Beans, Squash..... The three sisters are grown from the NE to the SE from the Plains to the SW and in the middle of the country.

The term "Three Sisters" originated with the Haudenosaunee, "The People of the Longhouse", also known as the Iroquois." Native American Gardening: Stories, Projects and Recipes for families by Caduto and Bruchac, tells the history of the importance of these 3 Crops to the Native Americans of this land.

This book offers garden design ideas where the three seeds were placed in one hole each offering nutrients, a climbing pole and preservation of soil. Rich in nutrients these three were the staple items when winter descended. As summer ends and fall is upon us we look at our harvest. We gather squashes. We have probably finished putting away corn and beans. Now the fun part begins enjoying these beautiful foods in so many ways, from toasting seeds to corn bread hot from the oven topped with our fruit jams.

Three Sisters' Stew from [www.cookingindex.com](http://www.cookingindex.com)

**Recipe Ingredients**      **Courses:** [Soup](#), [Vegetarian](#)      **Serves:** 6 people

1	Sugar pumpkin - (abt 2 lbs) (small) = (or 1 large butternut or carnival squash)	1 C	Homemade or canned vegetable stock (or water)
1 Tbsp	Olive oil	1	Fresh hot chile - (to 2) - seeded, minced (small)
1 Tbsp	Onion - chopped (medium)	1 tsp	Ground cumin
2	Garlic cloves - minced	1 tsp	Dried oregano
1/2	Green or red bell pepper - cut into short, (medium) narrow strips		Salt - to taste
1	Diced tomatoes - (14 to 16 oz) - with liquid		Freshly-ground black pepper - to taste
2 C	Cooked or canned pinto beans	3 Tbsp	Minced fresh cilantro - (to 4)
2 C	Corn kernels (from 2 large or 3 medium ears)		

**Recipe Instructions**      Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

Cut the pumpkin in half lengthwise and remove the seeds and fibers. Cover with aluminum foil and place the halves, cut-side up, in a foil-lined shallow baking pan. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes, or until easily pierced with a knife but still firm (if using squash, prepare the same way). When cool enough to handle, scoop out the pulp, and cut into large dice. Set aside until needed.

Heat the oil in a soup pot. Add the onion and saute over medium-low heat until translucent. Add the garlic and continue to saute until the onion is golden.

Add the pumpkin and all the remaining ingredients except the last 2 and bring to a simmer. Simmer gently, covered, until all the vegetables are tender, about 20 to 25 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

If time allows, let the stew stand for 1 to 2 hours before serving, then heat through as needed. Just before serving, stir in the cilantro. The stew should be thick and very moist but not soupy; add additional stock or water if needed. Serve in shallow bowls.

### Description:

"In Native American mythology, squash, corn, and beans are known as the "three sisters." These are the very crops, along with garden vegetables, that the harvest festival of Thanksgiving is meant to celebrate!"

**Master Gardener Judith Dreyer, MS, BSN**

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