WOODY PLANTS WITH INTERESTING BARK IN WINTER

A trip through the Arnold Arboretum in the dead of winter will disclose a number of plants with interesting bark characteristics, some of them new to many gardeners. The lists appended to this issue of Arnoldia are the results of just such a trip. Some of the plants are commonly known; others, possibly unusual in gardens, should very definitely be noted as potential colorful contributors to winter gardens. The more color in the winter landscape, the more interesting the garden.

The color and general characteristics of a tree's bark come with old age, and mature trees are valued specifically for these characteristics. However, shrubs with colored twigs frequently can be forced to grow brighter-colored twigs for winter display if a few simple maintenance items are practiced.

Cornus alba, the Tatarian dogwood, is known to have red one-year twigs. The color will not be pronounced on an old plant which has been growing in poor soil for some length of time, and the one-year growth may be only two or three inches in length. This is not conducive to a colorful display. If the same plant is heavily pruned in the early spring, possibly even cut to the ground, then it will send out vigorous young shoots which will color nicely by winter. Applying a nitrogenous fertilizer will also help in the production of colorful bark. In fact, any practice which aids the rapid vegetative growth of the shoots, will aid in the coloration of the bark of the twigs.

Varieties might well be selected which are known to be vividly colored. The best of all the shrubby dogwoods for colored winter twigs is Cornus alba sibirica, the Siberian dogwood with twigs a brilliant red, and when the plant is forced into vigorous growth during the growing season, there is not a woody plant with bark more prominently colored in winter.

Sunshine plays an important part in the coloration of some twigs, just as it does in promoting more intensive color in the fall foliage. Some of the blueberries, for
instance, may have green to greenish one-year twigs when they are grown in the shade, but in the sunshine their one-year twigs turn a bright red. This is especially true of such plants as *Cornus alba sibirica* and *Salix alba chermesina*, both of which can produce twigs of brilliant color. The older these plants become, the less brilliant this color, merely because the one-year twigs become smaller and more dispersed throughout the plant. When the plant is young, or when it has been pruned heavily, then the one-year shoots are confined to a smaller space, and make a much more brilliant display.

The following list of shrubs and trees include about 150 plants which have colored bark or colored twigs in winter, and all are growing in the Arnold Arboretum. Certainly there are sufficient to make possible an interesting selection for any winter garden. The seventy plants listed with an asterisk (*) have bark more interesting than the others and might be given preference wherever possible. Of course, there are other plants of interest for their bark characteristics in winter, but the ones listed are some of the more important.

**Plants with Red Twigs or Red Bark**

- *Acer palmatum*
- *Acer pseudo-sieboldianum* — Twigs red, but dispersed over such a wide area that the color is mostly unnoticeable from a distance
- *Acer sieboldianum*
- *Ceanothus pallidus rosea* — dull red
- *Cornus alba*
- *Cornus alba sibirica* — bright red, bark more colorful than any other dogwood
- *Cornus amomum*
- *Cornus arnoldiana*
- *Cornus australis*
- *Cornus glabrata*
- *Cornus obliqua*
- *Cornus pubescens*
- *Cornus stolonifera*
- *Cornus stolonifera coloradensis* — young twigs dull red
- *Cornus Walteri* — young twigs dark red
- *Gaylussacia baccata* — twigs of current year’s growth red
- *Gaylussacia frondosa* — twigs of current year’s growth red
- *Hydrangea petiolaris* — young twigs a shiny reddish brown
- *Leucothoe racemosa* — twigs of current year’s growth red
- *Pinus sylvestris* — bark of upper branches and trunk red
- *Rosa acicularis* — young twigs dark red
- *Rosa canina* — young twigs dark red
- *Rosa centifolia* — young twigs dull red
- *Rosa coriifolia cinerea* — young twigs glossy red
- *Rosa kochiana* — twigs bright red, one of best
PLATE XIV

Left—*Ulmus parvifolia*: The true Chinese elm. Apparently not all plants of this species have this desirable interesting bark characteristic. Trees should be propagated asexually from trees with this type of bark.

Right—*Stewartia koreana*: Korean stewartia. Several other stewartias also have this interesting type of bark.
Rosa luciae — young twigs dull reddish purple
Rosa multiflora — young twigs dull red
Rosa pomifera — young twigs glossy red
*Rosa setigera — twigs bright red, one of best
Rosa spaldingii — young twigs glossy red
*Rosa virginiana — twigs bright red, one of best
*Salix alba chermesina — vigorous young branches a bright red
*Vaccinium corymbosum — twigs of current year's growth red
*Viburnum opulus nanum — younger twigs red

Shrubs with Gray Twigs

(These are sufficiently prominent to afford a colorful contrast in the winter)
Acanthopanax sieboldianus — all twigs gray
Aesculus parviflora
Aralia sp.
*Buddleia alternifolia — young twigs gray, older branches light brown
*Clethra alnifolia
*Cornus racemosa
*Elaeagnus umbellata
*Ilex decidua — both young and old twigs gray
*Lonicer'a morrowii — all twigs gray
Lonicer'a tatarica — all twigs gray
Lycium chinense
Myrica pensylvanica
*Nellia sinensis — all twigs gray
*Prinsepia sp. — all twigs gray
Spiraea cana
Viburnum opulus
Viburnum sargentii
Viburnum trilobum

Plants with Green Twigs

Coronilla emeroides
Coronilla emerus — but not a good color
*Cytisus praecox
*Cytisus scoparius
*Cytisus supinus
Genista radiata
*Jasminum nudiflorum
*Kerria japonica
*Poncirus trifoliata — twigs, older branches green
*Rosa wichuraiana
Salix blanda — twigs green to brown

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PLATE XV

Left—*Acer griseum*: the Paper bark maple with lustrous brown exfoliating bark.
Right—*Pinus bungeana*: the Lace bark pine, the best of all the pines for ornamental bark.
Sophora japonica — twigs green but not a good color
Smilax sp.

**Shrubs with Yellow Twigs**

*Cornus stolonifera flaviramea*
Kerria japonica aureo-vittata — twigs predominantly yellow, but some pure green, some striped yellow and green

*Salix alba tristis
*Salix alba vitellina
*Zenobia pulverulenta — young twigs light yellowish brown. Probably this would be a prominent color if the plant were cut to the ground occasionally

**Shrubs with Twigs a Conspicuous Light Brown Color**

*Akebia quinata
Celastrus orbiculata
Deutzia sp.*

**Bark of Trunk and Branches Gray**

*Acer rubrum
*Acer saccharinum
*Amelanchier sp.
Celtis bungeana
Celtis laevigata — gray bark on upper trunk
Celtis occidentalis — gray bark on upper trunk

*Cladrastis lutea
Crataegus — many species
Euonymus sachalinensis — dark gray bark
Euonymus maackii

*Fagus — all species
*Magnolia — several species — especially the bark of the upper trunk and branches
Malus micromalus
Quercus borealis — bark of young trunk and branches
Quercus velutina — bark of young trunk and branches

*Sorbus sp. — light gray bark
*Ulmus carpinifolia
Ulmus hollandica superba — bark of young trunk and branches light gray
Ulmus laciniata nikoensis — bark light gray

**Bark of Trunk and Branches White**

*Betula coerulea
*Betula coerulea-grandis
*Betula japonica
*Betula maximowicziana

*Betula papyrifera (best)
*Betula populifolia
*Betula pendula
*Betula utilis
Bark of Trunk Cherry-like
(sometimes exfoliating)

Betula lutea — bark of older trunks yellowish brown
*Prunus sargentii
*Prunus serrula — bright red, one of best!
*Prunus schmittii — very glossy, red
Prunus — many other species of course, but above are some of the most outstanding
Syringa amurensis japonica

Bark of Trunk or Older Branches Exfoliating, Either Shredding Off in Long Strips or Flaking Off in Regular or Irregular Patches

*Acer griseum — one of best, light brown color
Acer triflorum
Betula davurica — purplish brown bark, very good and peculiarly interesting in that the bark peels or flakes off in regular strips an inch or so square
Betula lutea — bark of older trunks yellowish, cherry-like, exfoliating
Betula nigra — dark, blackish, plated bark on older trunks, often chipping off
Betula — white-barked species
Clethra acuminata — older bark brown, exposed young bark gray
Cornus officinalis
Deutzia glabrata — peculiar exfoliating bark, light brown new bark, dark brown old bark
Euonymus sanguinea — dark gray exfoliating bark, irregularly colored patches remaining on older stems
*Hicoria ovata — stiff older bark flaking off
*Hypericum arnoldianum — peeling and a lustrous reddish brown
*Kolkwitzia amabilis — bark shredding off in long strips
*Lonicera ferdinandii — bark shredding off in long strips
Lonicera iberica — bark shredding off in long strips
*Parrotia persica — bark flaking, older bark red brown
Physocarpus sp. — shredding bark
*Platanus acerifolia — greenish underbark on some specimens and not on others, flaking off in irregular patches
*Platanus occidentalis — white underbark, gray outerbark flaking off in irregular patches
*Pinus bungeana — bark flaking off in irregular patches, underbark almost white
Rosa roxburghii — bark shredding off in long strips
*Stewartia koreana — mottled bark and of the best! Older bark brown, younger bark light brown
Stewartia pseudo-camellia — also mottled but not as ornamental as S. koreana

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Ulmus parvifolia — mottled bark, flaking off in irregular patches. Apparently this is a clonal characteristic, for some trees do not seem to have it

Miscellaneous

Acer capillipes — green striped bark
* Acer pensylvanicum — green and striped bark
Ceanothus americanus — bark green to light brown
Decaisnea fargesii — gray to yellow old and young twigs
* Euonymus alata — corky wings on twigs and older branches
* Phellodendron amurensis — bark corky on mature trees
Prunus triloba — bark of older branches a pronounced black
Quercus montana — corky bark on mature trees
Rubus occidentalis — twigs whitish to pinkish
Salix fragilis — bark of young branches yellow brown
* Salix purpurea — twigs reddish purple
Ulmus alata — corky wings on twigs
Zelkova serrata — corky ridges on bark of twigs and small branches

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