

ARNOLDIA



A continuation of the
BULLETIN OF POPULAR INFORMATION
of the Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University

VOLUME 22

SEPTEMBER 14, 1962

NUMBERS 8-9

THE HONEYSUCKLES

THESE constitute a sturdy group of shrubs and vines, some of which can be grown in every state of the union. As a group they are not susceptible to severe disease troubles, but some of the vines are very susceptible to infestations of plant lice. Aside from this, these plants, within their hardiness limits, are easily grown and will usually produce a wealth of foliage, flower and fruit with very little care.

As a group they thrive in full sunshine, although there are a few species which seem to do better in partial shade. Also, it may well be that some of the species may do better in limestone soils than in acid soils. For instance, we have always had a difficult time in transplanting small plants of *Lonicera korolkowii floribunda*. Some of the honeysuckle vines native to Europe may also be in this category.

American nurseries list about 60 honeysuckles; the Arnold Arboretum is currently growing about 118. At least 240 species and varieties were considered in making up the following recommended list of 51 species and varieties. This is far too many, yet it must be considered that some seventeen of this recommended number are vines and are thus in a separate ornamental category from the shrubs.

However, a large number of the honeysuckle shrubs are either similar or have little to recommend them as ornamentals. Few have autumn color. Their chief ornamental value is their flowers, their colorful fruits, their ability to grow under various conditions, and sometimes their habit of growth.

The hardiest in the recommended list are *L. sempervirens*, *L. tatarica* and *L. chrysantha*, all hardy in Zone 3. In fact, the Tatarian honeysuckle is almost as common in the colder northern gardens as is the lilac. It was brought into cultivation about 1752 from southern Russia and shows a great variation in its offspring, both as to flowers and fruits. In fact, it has become naturalized in some parts of the eastern United States, for the birds readily distribute the seeds.

Nurserymen would do well to stop the practice of propagating honeysuckles from seed for anything other than plant breeding purposes because they hybridize

so readily. There are some excellent varieties of the Tatarian honeysuckle that have to be grown asexually in order to produce similar plants. Another case is that of the Morrow honeysuckle, which is a rounded bush with grayish-green leaves and an excellent ornamental. It has been propagated to such an extent by seed that most of the plants offered by commercial growers now are not true *L. morrowii*, but hybrids of this species and *L. tatarica*, with a corresponding decided upright habit in growth.

Fruits of the honeysuckles range in color from bright red and yellow to dark blue and black and some are whitish and translucent (*L. quinquelocularis*). They are most attractive to the birds. The early flowering species, like *fragrantissima* and *standishii*, of course bear early fruits in the late spring. These, together with the fruits of a few early flowering shrubs such as *Daphne mezereum*, come so early that they are avidly sought by birds, one of the reasons why they do not remain long enough to give color to the shrub.

On the other hand, the Tatarian honeysuckle, and others like it, bear their fruits in late June and some remain colorful for many weeks. There is a species, *L. maackii*, which is the last of all to bear colorful fruits. These are bright red and begin to color in late September. The leaves of this species remain on the plants well into November, so the bright, colorful, profusely borne berries, with a background of green leaves, do much to liven up the shrub border at a time when most other deciduous plants have already dropped their leaves. With these exceptions, most of the shrubby honeysuckles bear their fruits in the summer.

Flowering Shrub Honeysuckles

Pink and Red

A recent study I made of some of the pink- and red-flowering shrub honeysuckles finally settled the perennial question of just which is the darkest red-flowering bush honeysuckle. Without question the answer is 'Arnold Red.' Growing in close proximity to each other are all the contenders, *L. tatarica sibirica*, *L. korolkowii*, *zabelii*, 'Sheridan Red,' 'Hack's Red' and 'Arnold Red.' In our soils, 'Arnold Red' is the darkest.

Here is the way they might be listed, from the lightest pink to the darkest red, with color comparisons from the Nickerson Color Fan:

Very Pale Pink (almost white)

L. bella rosea, *L. notha*; **L. tatarica*, which varies considerably, *L. korolkowii* and its variety *floribunda*.

Pale Pink (2.5 R 9/3)

L. tatarica varieties **rosea*, **punicea* and **elegans*; *L. amoena* and its variety *'Arnoldiana.'

Petals striped Deep Pink and White

L. tatarica, varieties *angustifolia*, **lutea*, **sibirica* and *leroyana*.

* Best in the group.

Moderate Purplish Pink (2.5 RP 6/10)

* *L. korolkowii aurora*

Deep Purplish Pink (7.5 RP 6/12)

* *L. bella atrorosea*, 'Sheridan Red,' 'Hack's Red,' *L. amoena rosea* (5 RP 6/10).

Strong Purplish Red (7.5 RP 4/11)

* *L. korolkowii zabelii*; *L. maximowiczii* and its variety *sachalinensis*.

Deep Purplish Red (10 RP 3/10)

* 'Arnold Red'

Order of Bloom

(Recommended Honeysuckles)

Mid-April	fragrantissima
Early May	pileata
Mid-May	alpigena
	bella and vars.
	chrysantha and vars.
	claveyi or 'Clavey's Dwarf'
	syringantha
	thibetica
	'Arnold Red'
	'Dropmore'
Late May	amoena and vars.
	korolkowii aurora
	maackii and var.
	morrowii
	tatarica
	'Morden Orange'
Early June	etrusca
	korolkowii
Mid-June	brownii
	japonica halliana
Late June	henryi
Mid-July	heckrottii
	sempervirens and vars.

Recommended Honeysuckles

alpigena nana 3' Zone 5 Central Europe Dwarf Alps Honeysuckle

One of the few dwarf honeysuckles and so of value for this reason. Flowers deep red, but very small.

× **amoena alba** 9' Zone 5 (*tatarica* × *korolkowii*)

Rounded, twiggy bush with white flowers.

×**amoena 'arnoldiana'** 9' Zone 5 (*tatarica*×*korolkowii*) Arnold Honeysuckle

The flowers are flushed pink, $\frac{1}{4}$ " in diameter and more narrow than those of the other members of this species. Also, the leaves are more narrow, giving the plant a more delicate appearance.

×**bella candida** 6' Zone 4 (*morrowii*×*tatarica*)

With pure white flowers — the variety in the trade termed *L. bella albida* is probably a synonym. Hybrid vigor is apparent in these varieties, for they are all fast growing and most floriferous.

×**bella rosea** — similar to the above, but with flowers a very light pink. Undoubtedly this is badly confused in the trade with var. *atrorosea*, which actually has deep pink flowers.

×**brownii** Vine Zone 5 (*sempervirens*×*hirsuta*) Brown's Honeysuckle

A vine, somewhat similar to *L. sempervirens*, but apparently popular in Europe, not in America. Several varieties (*fuchsoides*, *plantierensis*, *punica* and *youngii*) differ chiefly in flower color which varies from scarlet to orange-red.

caprifolium Twining shrub Zone 5 Europe Sweet Honeysuckle

A twining vine with beautiful fragrant yellowish-white flowers 2" long in whorls, produced from June onwards. The fruit is orange and the vine will twine up to 20'.

chrysantha 12' Zone 3 China, Japan Coralline Honeysuckle

Flowers are a pale yellow, in pairs in May and June. The fruits are a bright coral red. Retained in this recommended list for its hardiness and its height.

'**Clavey's Dwarf**' — This originated several years prior to 1955 at Clavey's Ravinia Nurseries, Deerfield, Ill. It has been widely distributed, as the plant is good as a low, thick, quick-growing hedge needing little shearing. Mature plants are said to be 6 feet tall, but most of the plants I have seen are only half this height. The flowers are white, smaller than those of *L. tatarica* and not at all showy.

deflexicalyx 9' Zone 5 China

Flowers, in pairs, yellow during early May and profusely borne. The fruit is a bright orange-red.

×'**Dropmore**'—a hybrid of *L. bella* raised by F. L. Skinner of Dropmore, Manitoba, Canada, with pure white flowers. It grows 6–8 feet tall with a pendulous, graceful habit, blooms and fruits freely and is thoroughly hardy at Dropmore, making it hardy in Zone 3. Our plant is 8 feet tall and 12 feet in diameter.



PLATE XX

Upper (left) Fruiting branches: *Lonicera tatarica* 'Arnold Red' and *L. tatarica*. (right) *Lonicera* 'Clavey's Dwarf'. Lower (left) *Lonicera bella rosea*. (right) *Lonicera maackii podocarpa*.

etrusca 'Superba' Vine Zone 7 Southern Europe Cream Honeysuckle

The flower clusters of this variety are larger than those of the species and also the plant is more vigorous. In some areas it is half evergreen, in others deciduous, a climber with reddish-purple shoots, yellowish, fragrant flowers 2 inches long and trumpet-shaped, suffused with red and produced in the middle of the summer.

flava Vine Zone 5 Southeastern United States Yellow Honeysuckle

The fragrant, orange-yellow trumpet-shaped flowers are produced in one to three whorls per stalk. It twines only slightly, but is considered to be the handsomest of our native honeysuckles.

fragrantissima 6' Zone 5 China Winter Honeysuckle

Blooming in mid-April with very fragrant flowers, this is a common favorite, half evergreen in the South. One of the few honeysuckles to bear flowers on the previous year's growth, it is one of the first of this genus to bear red fruits in late May. These are quickly eaten by the birds. It has a poor, open habit of growth, but this can be controlled with proper pruning.

×**heckrottii** Vine-like Zone 5 Origin unknown Everblooming Honeysuckle

This has often been considered one of the best of the climbing honeysuckles. It flowers in June with pink (outside) and yellow (inside) corolla, blooming throughout the summer. The buds are actually carmine and as they open the yellow inside the corolla lends a beautiful second color to the combination. The Willis Nursery of Ottawa, Kansas, has called this species 'Goldflame,' a name which has increased its sales markedly.

'Goldflame'—see *L. heckrottii*.

henryi Vine Zone 4 China Henry Honeysuckle

The flowers are yellowish to purplish red, the fruits black. This is a half-evergreen vine without the run-away vigor of Hall's Honeysuckle and thus makes an excellent, controllable ground cover.

hildebrandtiana Vine, climbs 60–80' Zone 9 Burma-China Giant Honeysuckle

The fragrant flowers are creamy white, changing to rich orange, in pairs $3\frac{1}{2}$ –6" long. It has the largest flowers, fruits and leaves of all the climbing honeysuckles and is evergreen, but is hardy only in the deep South.

japonica aureo-reticulata Vine Zone 4 Eastern Asia Golden Honeysuckle

Not as vigorous as Hall's Honeysuckle, the leaves have a pleasing yellow netted marking, giving rise to the common name. It colors best in the full sun.



PLATE XXI

Upper: *Lonicera amoena* 'Arnoldiana.' Lower: *Lonicera* 'Dropmore.'

japonica halliana Twining vine Zone 4 eastern Asia Hall's Honeysuckle

Actually a weed and a nuisance in many areas where it has escaped cultivation — commonly known to all growers.

japonica repens — not so vigorous as Hall's Honeysuckle, the lower leaves are sometimes lobed — a neater plant, otherwise similar to it.

korolkowii 12' Zone 5 Turkestan Blue-leaf Honeysuckle

As far as I can tell, this species and its variety *floribunda* are inseparably mixed in the trade. The variety is supposed to be the better of the two in flower, but our specimens of them are definitely similar. They do have a gray-green foliage which makes them desirable in the landscape.

korolkowii aurora — much the better variety, with moderately purplish-pink flowers (2.5 RP 6/10 Nickerson Color Fan) up to 3" in diameter. This blooms profusely.

korolkowii zabelii — has flowers a darker red than all honeysuckles except 'Arnold Red' which is the darkest.

maackii 15' Zone 2 Manchuria, Korea Amur Honeysuckle

The chances are that this species and its variety *podocarpa* are badly mixed in nurseries. The species is much hardier and has larger flowers, while the variety is more widespreading. The Amur Honeysuckle is one of the tallest and hardiest of all the honeysuckles. The flowers appear in early June and the red fruits remain on the plant until November, as do the leaves.

morrowii 6' Zone 3 Japan Morrow Honeysuckle

A wide, rounded, dense bush with gray-green leaves, white flowers maturing to yellow and dark red fruits. The true species is desirable, but it has been grown from seed so much that the real plant is extremely difficult to find anywhere. Most plants being offered under this name now are upright hybrids (*morrowii* × *tatarica*) and are decidedly mediocre as ornamentals.

nitida 6' Zone 7 Central and Western China Box Honeysuckle

With creamy white, fragrant flowers which are none too profuse, and blue fruits, this twiggy shrub is a small-leaved evergreen (leaves about $\frac{1}{2}$ " long) and is excellent for clipped hedges. It withstands salt water spray well.

pileata 4' Zone 5 China Privet Honeysuckle

Deciduous or evergreen low shrub, flowers have little beauty and though the fruit is translucent, it is usually sparsely borne. Does well at the seashore. Ap-



PLATE XXII

Upper: *Lonicera* 'Clavey's Dwarf.' Lower: *Lonicera alpigena nana*.

parently young plants tend to be more evergreen than older ones, withstanding some shade.

prostrata Prostrate shrub Zone 5 W. China Creeping Honeysuckle

E. H. Wilson said this was especially useful in bank planting or ground cover. The flowers are pale yellow, have no fragrance and the reddish fruits are egg-shaped. Nothing to commend it except its habit, with branches flat on the ground and the plant making a low, hemispherical mass of foliage.

pyrenaica 2-3' Zone 5 S. E. Europe Pyrenees Honeysuckle

This plant is an interesting dwarf not thoroughly hardy in the Arnold Arboretum. Of value only because of its size. The flowers are pinkish to white and the fruits, united at the base, are red.

'Redgold'—see *L. tellmanniana*.

sempervirens Vine Zone 3 Eastern United States Trumpet Honeysuckle

The orange, scarlet or yellow flowers of this straggly vine make it most conspicuous. The trumpet-shaped flowers are 2" long, but are not fragrant. Occasionally it becomes infested with plant lice, but it is the hardiest of all the honeysuckle vines and as such, has merit.

sempervirens sulphurea—with yellow flowers.

sempervirens 'Superba'—with bright scarlet flowers. It is highly probable that this variety is being offered under several names. 'Magnifica,' 'Dreer's Everblooming,' 'Red Coral,' 'Red Trumpet' and 'Rubra' are offered in various parts of the country, probably all traceable to a selection made by Dreer's of Philadelphia, Pa., 30 or 40 years ago, a variety that blooms almost continuously in the summer when grown in full sunshine.

syringantha 6' Zone 4 N. W. China Lilac Honeysuckle

With lilac-colored, very fragrant flowers which are not always abundantly borne. It has a mound-like, sprawling habit of growth and red fruit. Mr. H.G. Hillier (England) has selected a seedling which he states has slightly larger flowers than the species and he has given it the varietal name 'Grandiflora.'

syringa wolfii 4'

Of more prostrate habit than the species and producing especially fragrant carmine flowers.

tatarica 9' Zone 3 Southern Russia Tatarian Dogwood

An upright, vigorous shrub with pink to white, very fragrant flowers and red or yellow fruits. One of the most dependable and hardy of ornamental shrubs.

Many selections have been made, but unfortunately most show a leggy condition at the base as the plants mature. A few of the worthy varieties are:

alba — flowers pure white.

'Arnold Red' — darkest red flowers of any shrub honeysuckle, large red fruits.

grandiflora — with large white flowers, sometimes called 'Bride.'

leroyana — a dwarf variety 3' tall, flowers few, pink and white stripes, 1¼" in diameter, valued for its low height.

lutea — fruits yellow, flowers with pink stripes in center of petals, edges white.

The flowers of varieties *punicea* and *elegans* are similar, but because of the bright yellow fruits, *lutea* is selected as the best of this group.

'Morden Orange' — very pale pink flowers; fruits orange. Originated at the Canada Experiment Farm, Morden, Manitoba, Canada, but not deemed worthy of introduction by them. Introduced by a United States nursery.

nana — plants 3' high, pink flowers.

parviflora — one of the best varieties for white flowers.

rosea — flowers rosy pink outside, light pink inside.

sibirica — flowers with deep pink stripes in center of petals and white margins, leaves larger than those of species.

virginalis — rosy pink flower buds and flowers; the largest flowers of any *L. tartarica* variety.

× **tellmanniana** Vine Zone 5 (*tragophylla* × *sempervirens*) Tellman Honeysuckle

A deciduous climbing vine, with flowers in terminal heads of 6-12 flowers in each cluster. They are 2 inches long and 1 inch across, a beautiful yellow, the buds having a touch of red. (Commonly called 'Redgold' by Willis Nursery Co., Ottawa, Kansas, this was a mere replacing of the species common name.)

thibetica 4' Zone 4 W. China Tibet Honeysuckle

The flowers are lilac-colored and especially fragrant, the fruits are red. It is a deciduous, low-spreading shrub, sometimes with a width of 6-10 feet. Under side of leaves is covered with a felt of pale gray hairs.

tragophylla Zone 5 China Chinese Woodbine

A climbing shrub with bright yellow flowers in large terminal heads of 10-20 flowers in each head. They are not fragrant and the plant does best in semi-shade. This apparently does best in limestone soils, like many another *Lonicera*.

yunnanensis Twining shrub Zone 7 China Yunnan Honeysuckle

Low creeper with yellow flowers.

DONALD WYMAN