

SELECTING PLANTS FOR WINTER APPEAL

Putting your landscapes to sleep for the winter doesn't mean they can't still look good. See below for some ideas and suggestions on plants that have a ton of winter appeal!

EVERGREEN

This is the most popular choice for maintaining green all year round. From trees to shrubs, and from yellow, orange, red, light green and dark green, there are many different plants to choose from. Evergreen trees and shrubs are especially popular along property borders to create a natural barrier for privacy year round. Holly, thuja, arborvitae, juniper (pictured), nandina, spruce and fir are just a handful of evergreen plants that do well in the mid-Atlantic area.



STRUCTURE

You can create a lot of interest with evergreen or deciduous trees by choosing species with a naturally interesting structure, such as weeping cherries and larch species Harry Walking Stick. You can also create an interesting effect using advanced pruning techniques such as topiary pruning and espalier pruning (pictured), or training evergreen vines using wire.



BERRIES

Not only do fruiting trees and bushes added color in the off-season, they can also attract wildlife to keep you entertained during the winter months. Crab apple, winterberry and holly are best known for their long lasting red berries. The yew, which is an evergreen shrub, also produces edible red berries in late fall. The beauty berry bush gets its name from its stunning bright purple berries (pictured right).



BARK AND TWIGS

Some trees and bushes have more interesting bark and twigs than their leaves. The River birch or Aspen and Paper bark maple are a few examples of trees with exfoliating bark. A very popular bush for the winter months is the red twig dogwood. This bush is named appropriately for its bright red twigs. While many evergreen trees and bushes struggle in wet areas, the red-twig dogwood (pictured) is a great winter option if you have wet soils.



ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

Selecting cool-season, ornamental grasses can keep a 'soft' look throughout the winter months. It is easy to lose the soft-look associated with leaves and foliage once the weather turns. You will still need to cut down the dead stalks before the grass begins actively growing in the spring.



WINTER FLOWERS

The Okame Cherry (pictured) generally blooms in late winter to early spring. Warm winter days may trick the tree into producing flowers early. Some of the Okame trees are flowering now, in early December, due to warmer than usual temperatures. If you are looking for flowers, there are several types of early blooming bulbs to choose from like daffodils, narcissus, and tulips, which bloom towards the end of winter. Pansies are another choice of annual flower that survives the winter but will need to be replaced in the summer.

