



# Garden Clippings



Niagara College Greenhouse Centre Success Sheet No. 25

## Shrubs with Attractive Winter Fruit

### Deciduous Shrubs

Many of the **viburnum bushes** have attractive fruit and a wide range of colours. The American cranberry bush (*Viburnum trilobum*), for example, grows up to 10', has snowy-white flowers in spring and vivid red or vibrant yellow fruit in winter. The double-file viburnum (*V. plicatum tomentosum*) is a very beautiful shrub growing up to 10' with graceful horizontal branches supporting two rows of creamy-white flowers, maturing into upright, deep-red berries. Viburnums look great when mass planted and are excellent ways to attract wildlife to the garden.

The **Chinese beautyberry** (*Callicarpa dichotoma*) has an attractive arching habit. This 4' bush has long, curving branches, rich green leaves and numerous pink blooms in spring. The berries, held in clusters around the stem, are purple and persist well into winter, a stunning effect when contrasted against snow. The berries also are attractive in a mixed perennial or shrub border.

A deciduous holly, the common **winterberry** (*Ilex verticillata*) grows 4-6' and has a compact, attractive summer habit. The winter fruits are spectacular: very abundant orange to scarlet berries are held on bare branches throughout the shrub. Because only the female plants bear fruit, one male bush is needed for every five female. This shrub looks especially attractive when mass planted. It also attracts many birds to the garden.

### Evergreen Shrubs

The **firethorn** (*Pyracantha* spp.), which can grow up to 15' on a support, has large clusters

of cream-coloured flowers in spring, maturing into scarlet, flame-orange or golden-yellow pendulous berries. These ripen and remain throughout the winter. The bright berries contrast well with the evergreen foliage. Firethorns are an excellent plant for a south-facing wall that needs colour, but not too close to a pathway because they do have sharp thorns.

A lesser-known, attractive winter shrub is the **Oregon grapeholly** (*Mahonia aquifolium*). This medium-sized shrub, growing to 4', has attractive holly-like foliage, which turns a pleasant bronze or burgundy colour in the fall. The spring flowers are bright yellow and held in clusters atop the rich-green foliage. Pendulous clusters of deep-purple berries cascade from the top of the shrub and remain well into winter. Grapeholly can be used in a moist, acidic soil where other plants might not thrive.

**Bearberry cotoneaster** (*Cotoneaster dammeri*) is a mounding, spreading evergreen groundcover with silver-grey bark and tiny, dark-green leaves. This spreading shrub grows to 1' and has a spread of up to 6'. White flowers cover the plant in spring and are followed by scarlet berries throughout winter. This is a good plant to add colour to dry, rocky soil in which other plants cannot survive.

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