

# GREATPLANTS GARDENER 2024

A Publication of the Nebraska Statewide  
Arboretum



plantnebraska.org

## Plains-proven Plants for Beautiful Landscapes

Today's gardeners are constantly seeking landscape plants that are not only reliably hardy, easy to care for and ornamentally worthwhile to grow, they also want plants that provide an ecological service or benefit. The goal of the GreatPlants for the Great Plains program is to assist gardeners in their quest to discover new or overlooked plants that deserve to be planted more.

The 2024 GreatPlants of the Year featured in this issue were voted on by members of the Nebraska Nursery & Landscape Association (NNLA)—represented by nursery professionals, landscape designers and horticulture educators. Make plans to include this year's winners in your landscape design; they deserve to be in every garden.

### Shadblow Serviceberry

The 2024 Tree of the Year, the shadblow serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*), is a fantastic small tree that truly provides four seasons of beauty in the landscape. In winter, the tree displays a graceful, arching growth habit and smooth, light gray bark. The early spring flowers make a splash in the dull, post-winter landscape, while in the fall, the foliage turns a lovely orange to rusty red (yellow-orange with more shade).

The fruit is delicious if you can beat the birds to the harvest (consider using bird netting if you want to use the fruit). Serviceberry fruits make wonderful pies, cobblers and crisps or as a sauce for pouring over ice cream, yogurt or pound cake. They are also very nutritious—high in vitamins A, C and E, iron, calcium, manganese, magnesium and full of fiber. You can freeze them for later use or dry them for a sweet, flavorful addition to homemade trail mix.

The serviceberry foliage is also a larval food source for more than 100 species of butterflies and moths. This sounds like a caterpillar buffet, but rest assured, they only take a bit here and there. As a multi-stemmed tree, it provides a great habitat and winter shelter for nesting birds.

Serviceberry is an understory tree native to the eastern U.S., often found growing in clumps in lowlands and thickets.

*Continued on page 4...*

## In This Issue

GreatPlants of 2024  
Pages 1-4

Keep Your Eye Out for  
the Spotted Lantern Fly  
Page 5

Vertical Layering in  
Your Landscapes  
Pages 6-7

The Conifer Conundrum  
Pages 8-9

Organizational  
Memberships & Grants  
Page 10

Previous GreatPlants  
Winners 1998-2023  
Pages 11-14

Releases & Introductions  
Page 15



A joint program of Nebraska  
Statewide Arboretum and  
Nebraska Nursery & Landscape  
Association

# Introducing the GreatPlants of 2024

## Perennial of the Year

### *Agastache* 'Blue Fortune' Hyssop

Height: 3-4 feet high

Spread: 2 feet wide

Moist to dry, well-drained soil

Full sun

'Blue Fortune' is a European hybrid hyssop known for its vigor, cold hardiness and adaptability to grow across the Great Plains. A sterile hybrid resulting from a cross between *A. rugosa* and our native *A. foeniculum*, 'Blue Fortune' was bred and selected in Rotterdam, Netherlands. The lavender blue, bottle brush-like flower spikes are highly attractive to bees and butterflies. This 3-4' high perennial has it all: it's easy to grow, attracts many bees and butterflies, has an extended bloom time of more than four weeks, is deer and rabbit resistant, can be made into an aromatic tea, thrives in containers and combines well with most any perennial.



## Tree of the Year:

### Shadblow Serviceberry

### *Amelanchier canadensis*

Height: 15-20 feet high

Spread: 12-15 feet wide

Medium to moist, well-drained soil

Full sun to part shade

This small native tree is an absolute prize in the garden. It starts as a relatively slow growing, multi-stemmed shrub, eventually growing into a small tree. In early spring it features showy, slightly fragrant, white flowers in drooping clusters. In late spring the flowers give way to clusters of blueberry-size fruit, which turns red and finally matures to a dark purplish black. This tree provides nectar for bees emerging early in spring, and songbirds relish the fruit (so do people!). The attractive, oval leaves change to a fiery orange-red in autumn. Shadblow got its name because its flowers "blow" (bloom) when the shad swim upstream to spawn.



## Shrub of the Year: Snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus*

Height: 3-5 feet high  
Spread: 4-5 feet wide  
Moist to dry, well-drained soil  
Full sun to part shade

Snowberry is a durable, dense, multi-stemmed native shrub that is incredibly adaptable, performing well in sun or shade. Although not loud and showy, it is a great addition planted as a groundcover or massed on slopes for erosion control, or as a facer shrub in front of taller, leggier plantings. It has attractive, blue-green foliage and dainty, light pink, clustered flowers in spring. The bell-shaped flowers might be tiny and not considered “significant,” but they attract many pollinating insects to sip their nectar. As the leaves finally drop in the fall to reveal the bare wiry stems, clusters of snowy white berries appear, drooping on the tips of branches.



photo credit: H. Zell

## Conifer of the Year: Japanese White Pine *Pinus parviflora*

Height: 25-40 feet high  
Spread: 20-40 feet wide  
Medium to moist, well-drained soil  
Full sun

Japanese white pine is an attractive, slow-growing evergreen that is an excellent specimen for small landscapes or on properties with limited space. When it's young, it has a dense, pyramidal form, but over time it develops more open branching and a broad, flat-topped crown. The fine textured, bluish-green needles come in bundles of five, stiff and twisted as brush-like tufts on strong horizontal branches. Japanese white pine performs best in full sun and is relatively tolerant of most soils if they are well-drained. It is also very popular as a bonsai specimen and sought after by bonsai enthusiasts around the world.



## Grass of the Year: 'Blackhawks' Blue Stem *Andropogon gerardii*

Height: 4-5 feet high  
Spread: 2 feet wide  
Medium to dry, well-drained soil  
Full sun

'Blackhawks' is an outstanding new cultivar, discovered as a seedling of *Andropogon gerardii* 'Red October.' It is shorter and more upright than the typical big bluestem species. This hardy, durable grass emerges in spring with dark green foliage. In late summer the leaf tips turn purple, and the flowering stalks rise above the knee-high basal foliage, each topped with dark, reddish-purple seed heads. In early fall the entire plant deepens in color from a rich, dark purple to almost black by late September. This long-lived grass is easy to grow, offers beauty year-round and is very adaptable to a variety of soil types.

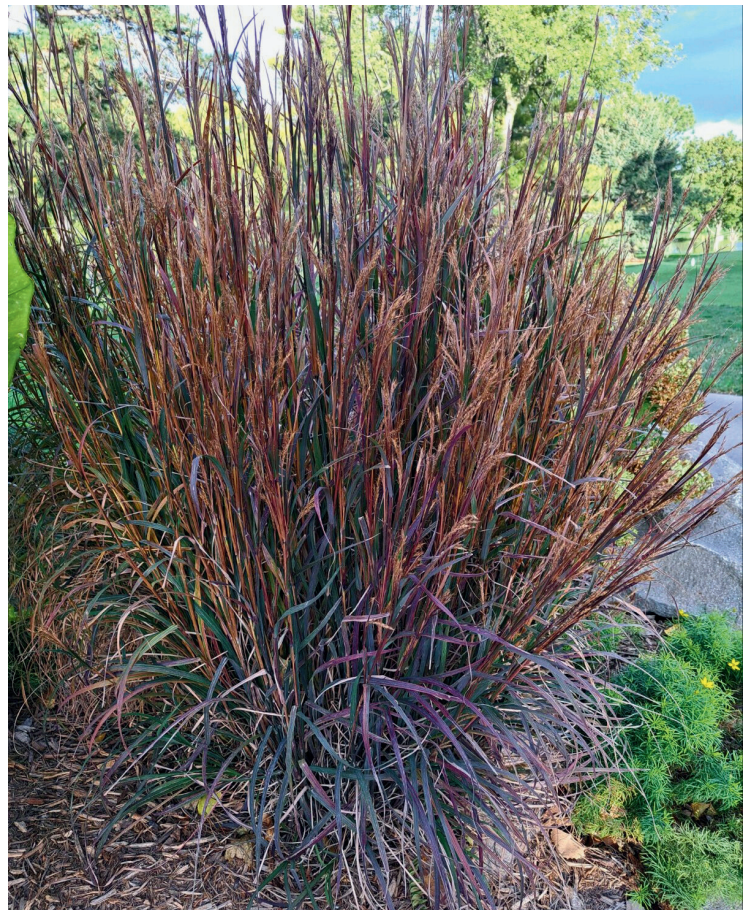


photo credit: Jeannie Hadwick, Country Club of Lincoln

### *Plains-proven Plants...continued from page 1.*

In the landscape serviceberry does best in filtered sun as an understory tree, but it also grows well when planted in full sun (full sun is better for fruit production, too). It is tolerant of most soil types, but performs better in well-drained, rich soil. Serviceberry does not like heavy clay soil, which may lead to root rot. Mulch the area around the plant lightly and apply supplemental water during its first year or when droughty conditions warrant watering.

### **'Blue Fortune' Hyssop**

The 2024 Perennial of the Year, 'Blue Fortune' hyssop, is well known as a pollinator magnet. The tiny, tube-shaped flowers are packed onto dozens of upright spikes that rise above the foliage in summer. The flowers are clustered by the hundreds, bringing myriad beneficial insects to sip its nectar. Later in the fall and winter, the dried flower spikes turn a lovely buff brown and add seasonal beauty to the landscape. Its fuzzy, licorice-scented foliage can be dried or used fresh to make a delicious, beneficial tea that is rich in antioxidants, with cooling, digestive and immune-supporting and uplifting properties.

This *Agastache* variety is more tolerant of cold winters and wet soils than other hyssops. It is also very heat and drought tolerant once it's established. Simply put, this hardy perennial is an exceptional performer, creating a stunning effect when planted with other perennials. It's ready to have an award-winning role in any sun-soaked garden.

*Bob Henrickson is the Horticulture Program Coordinator for the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum.*

**Serviceberry foliage is a larval food source for more than 100 species of butterflies and moths**

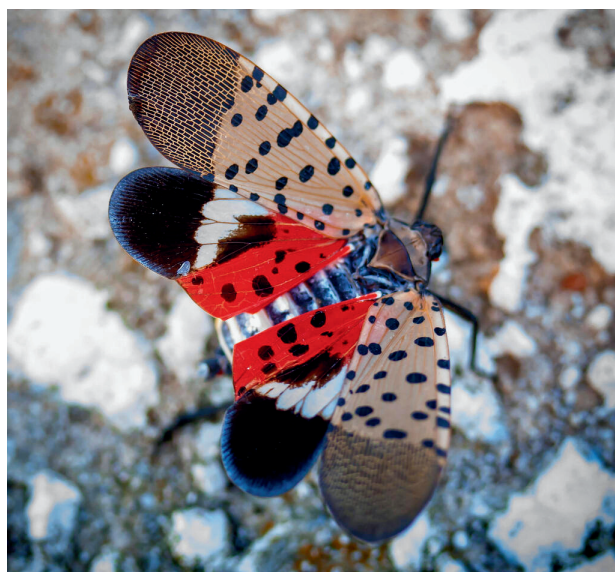
**Bob Henrickson**

# Invasive Insect on the Horizon

*Keep an eye out for the spotted lantern fly.*

The spotted lantern fly (SLF), also called the lantern moth, is a bit of a misnomer in that it's neither a fly nor a moth. Rather, it's a member of the *Fulgoridae*, or planthopper family. Planthoppers pierce the stems of host plants with a straw-like mouth part, feeding on sugary phloem. The planthopper then secretes honeydew, a sticky substance that is a sweet treat for other insects like wasps or ants.

Typically, planthoppers don't pose much threat to trees. However, in higher numbers, they can be a nuisance pest, as the prolific honeydew produced can leave a sticky mess on everything from concrete to cars. Tip die-back or yellowing leaves can also occur if infestation numbers are high, but native insect predators, parasites or pathogens will help to control populations.



*Adult spotted lantern fly with its red hindwing.*

SLF, however, is a different matter. This invasive, non-native planthopper from Asia was first discovered in Pennsylvania in 2014, having presumably arrived with a shipment of cut stone from China in 2012. Since then, 18 states have detected SLF. Although it has yet to arrive in Nebraska, it was spotted in Iowa's Dallas County in 2022.

SLF prefers more than 70 hosts—including tree of heaven, as well as economically important plants like grapes, hops, almond trees, walnut trees, apples and plums—and can monopolize host plants in high numbers. Wounds caused by feeding can be quite severe, especially on tree of heaven and grapevines.

## How to Identify Spotted Lantern Fly

**Egg Masses:** These grey, oblong-shaped eggs are laid from July to December on the bark of host plants or on any hard surface, including lawn furniture or cars. The masses are roughly one inch in length and resemble patches of mud (see left photo below). The eggs overwinter until they hatch during May of the following year.

**Nymph Instars:** SLF has four wingless, instar stages (the phase between two periods of molting) from its initial hatch in May until morphing into adults in July. The first three instars are black with white spots. The fourth instar develops red and black coloring with white spots.

**Adults:** SLF forms wings when it morphs into its adult stage. The wingspan can be over 2 inches long and the body over 1 inch in length. At rest or during feeding, SLF appears grey with black spots and a distinct black, net-like appearance on the forewing. With its wings spread, a red hindwing with black spotting becomes visible. Adults can be seen from July to December.



*Left: unhatched SLF eggs look like a patch of mud. Right: instar stages.*

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) and the Nebraska Forest Service (NFS) are currently monitoring for SLF. It is imperative that the insect is detected early to help minimize its impact. If you

suspect you have spotted SLF, or would like more information, contact the NFS or the NDA.

*Jennifer Morris is a Forest Health Specialist for the Nebraska Forest Service.*

# Vertical Layering In Woody Landscapes

*Consider plantings of varying heights to create an inviting grove.*

Vertical layering refers to the intentional use of a variety of heights in our trees, shrubs and plants. Layering your landscape is a simple way to create greater aesthetic interest as well as improve function and management. Let's create a hypothetical landscape that we can explore to see how layering improves space and draws people in.

Traditionally, this landscape may have three big shade trees with small mulch rings surrounded by turf, but instead, we will layer smaller trees and shrubs underneath to create a grove. Say our large shade trees are sycamores. If these tall maturing trees (60-80 feet or higher) are standing alone in a vast expanse of turf, the height change can feel abrupt. To remedy the jarring effect of these two extremes, we'll add two Ohio buckeye (20-40 feet high) out front to create another step up in height. Along the edge of this grove there may be space for a couple of understory trees, like red bud or aronia.



*A variety of tree and planting heights attracts the visitor's eye and draws them further into the landscape to explore and enjoy.*

Now, from far away, the sycamores will easily catch a person's attention, while the buckeyes will keep the viewer's eyes moving down. Meanwhile, the smaller trees and shrubs underneath create an edge to our grove, inviting visitors in to see what else there is to discover.

Within our grove, we find room for smaller shrubs and maybe even a few shade-loving perennials. In a large open space, like a college campus, this grove could be quite spread out, with room for a path to meander through, but in a front or back yard, where space is tighter, you may have two shade trees with a smaller cluster of shrubs underneath.



NSA Sustainable Landscape Specialist Sarah Buckley sketched a quick rendering of a vertically layered landscape to illustrate the three levels of plantings.

- Tall, mature trees serve as the backdrop or anchors, particularly in a larger landscape.
- Medium-height or understory trees draw the viewer's eyes downward.
- Shrubs can help define a space and create the sense of privacy or intimacy.
- Shade-loving perennials can add lushness and a spot of color to the grove.

## Benefits of Vertical Layering

Functionally, a layered landscape provides significantly more benefits than one that features all tall trees or all perennials.

### 1 Better Habitat for Birds and Small Mammals

Take a look at our hypothetical landscape, and we find habitat from the tops of the trees to the ground under the shrubs. Birds and mammals prefer different habitats, depending on their species. A northern flicker, for instance, forages for ants and beetles on the ground and therefore can be found around shrubs and other low plantings, while a red bellied woodpecker pecks at the bark of medium to large trees when it's hunting for food. Offer a variety of vertical layers, and you'll likely get a variety of wildlife in your backyard.

### 2 More Complete Shade, Better Screening & a More Effective Sound Barrier

A vertically layered landscape offers shade from the ground up, which means we are protected from midday heat and late afternoon sun.

Plantings of varying heights also provide visual screening from nosy neighbors and a sound buffer for noisy traffic. If you live by a main road or a highway, you've probably noticed that traffic sounds louder in the winter, after deciduous trees have dropped their leaves. Mixing understory shrubs and small trees like viburnums and dogwoods can screen out sights and sounds for at least part of the year.



Separating trees and shrubs from grass is healthier for both.



Vertical layering provides more visual interest during the winter months.

### 3 More Visual Interest in the Winter Months

As the photo above attests, vertical layers also offer more visual interest, especially in a winter landscape (even a snowless winter landscape!). Bare tree branches create compelling architectural forms in the minimalist landscape, while grasses add soft movement and flower stalks and seed heads contribute interesting detail. Many trees also produce berries that are not only appealing to birds and other wildlife, but can also add a vibrant splash of color to an otherwise monochromatic landscape.

### 4 Better Tree Health & Easier Maintenance

When it comes to maintenance and long-term health, clustering trees and shrubs into groves that are separate from turf grass makes everyone's job easier.

Because trees and turf have wildly different needs, from soil compaction to watering, separating the two makes management of both easier. Turf can have the dense, moist soil it thrives in, while trees can enjoy the deep waterings and looser soil they prefer. A mulched area can be used to create a buffer between the mower and the trees to prevent root and trunk damage, with a curved edge allowing the mower to easily follow alongside the border without cutting corners or trimming.

*Sarah Buckley is a Sustainable Landscape Specialist for the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum.*

# The Conifer Conundrum

*Climate change is impacting the livelihood of conifers in Nebraska, but there are still some great options to consider.*

Conifers, including most evergreens, provide many benefits to us, and perhaps no benefit is more important or appreciated than their ability to help us get through the winter. Nothing beats a group of evergreens for softening the harsh winter winds that can chill us to our bones. When fall colors fade and we're mostly stuck inside for a few months, the view of an evergreen or two out the window can remind us of warmer days to come and the eventual return of green landscapes. In addition, conifers work well for screening unsightly views, and they provide critical habitat for wildlife, especially birds.



*Left: a ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) stand at Pioneers Park in Lincoln; right: a ponderosa wind break in Waverly.*

## The Challenges with Conifers

Unfortunately, it's not always easy to grow or keep conifers in our Great Plains landscapes. The biggest issue is our climate. Many of the most commonly planted conifers come from protected and moist locations in mountain environments, and they can struggle when we subject them to the windy winters, hot summers and frequent droughts of the Great Plains.

At the same time, high summer humidity can lead to foliar diseases on many species, especially in the eastern half of the state. Our gradually warming climate is taking a toll on some iconic species and an ever-growing list of diseases and insect pests is wreaking havoc, including pine wilt disease, which has killed thousands of introduced pines across the state in recent decades.

## The Case for Conifers

Despite these problems, there are still several conifers which can be successfully grown when properly planted and cared for. Four of the toughest species we can grow are our Nebraska natives: eastern redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*), Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) and limber pine (*Pinus flexilis*), which are all climate adapted and very drought tolerant when established. In fact, none of them should be placed in highly irrigated



*Limber pine (*Pinus flexilis*) is small to medium size and slow-growing.*



landscapes. Ponderosa pine is an especially good choice across the state and can be used as both a shade tree in a yard and as part of a shelterbelt. Expect it to grow 50-70 feet tall and 30-50 feet wide.

Beyond the Nebraska natives, here are several other well-adapted species to consider:

- **Black Hills spruce** (*Picea glauca*) is a pyramidal tree similar to Colorado spruce but seems to be more tolerant of our warming climate. Grows 40-60 feet tall and 20-25 feet wide.
- **Rocky Mountain Douglas fir** (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) has a similar form as Black Hills spruce but with soft needles. Grows 50-60 feet tall and 20-30 feet wide.
- **Concolor fir** (*Abies concolor*) is a graceful tree with a silver-blue color similar to Colorado blue spruce. Grows 40-60 feet tall and 20-30 feet wide.
- **Norway spruce** (*Picea abies*) is taller and wider growing than other spruces and is a better choice for southeast Nebraska than Colorado spruce. Grows 50-70 feet tall and 25-35 feet wide.
- **Southwestern white pine** (*Pinus strobiformis*) is a drought-tolerant, soft-needled pine from the southwest U.S. that has been doing well across the state. Grows 30-50 feet tall and 20-25 feet wide.
- **Taylor juniper** (*Juniperus virginiana* 'Taylor') is a very narrow and upright form of redcedar that originated in Nebraska. It makes a good accent plant where a green column is desired. Grows 20-25 feet tall and 3-5 feet wide.



Concolor fir (*Abies concolor*) needles.



Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) cone.

Sometimes it's easier to point out what not to plant. These evergreens that have been mainstays in Nebraska for decades are now problematic:

- **Scotch pine and Austrian pine** (*Pinus sylvestris* and *Pinus nigra*) are highly susceptible to pine wilt disease. Scotch pine should not be planted at all; Austrian pine should be used only in western Nebraska.
- **Colorado spruce** (*Picea pungens*) is a common evergreen that is showing serious decline in southeast Nebraska, most likely due to our warming climate.
- **Eastern white pine** (*Pinus strobus*) struggles in high heat and drought, and many mature trees have declined in eastern Nebraska in recent years. Plant it only where the soil can be kept moist during drought.

- **Eastern redcedar** (*Juniperus virginiana*) is the only evergreen native to southeast Nebraska. It's an incredibly tough tree but is spreading rapidly into our grasslands and woodlands. Think twice before planting it.

Finally, not all conifers are evergreens. Bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) and larch (*Larix*) are deciduous conifers that lose their needles in the fall. Bald cypress is an especially good choice for moist sites in eastern Nebraska.

To learn about many other potential species for planting, visit NSA's website, [plantnebraska.org](http://plantnebraska.org), and click the Resources & Events button and then "Tips, Help & How-To" to get to our searchable resource library.

*Justin Evertson is the Green Infrastructure Coordinator for the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum.*

# NSA Awarded \$10 Million Community Forestry Grant

*Funds will support tree planting, tree removal and workforce development.*

NSA was recently awarded a \$10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to strengthen Nebraska's urban forest infrastructure in disadvantaged Nebraska communities.

NSA will serve as a "pass-through" administrator of the grant by creating competitive sub-award programs under its current granting structure to accomplish the objectives over the five-year grant period. One hundred percent of the urban forest infrastructure work that will take place with the grant funds will align with the Justice40 initiative, which aims to bring resources to disadvantaged communities most impacted by climate change, pollution and environmental hazards.

Programs will include tree removal, including ash trees infected with emerald ash borer; tree plantings to mitigate urban heat island effect in communities that qualify for grant funding; and the implementation of workforce training programs to increase the number of certified arborists and other tree care professionals in the state.



*Grant funding will be allocated to disadvantaged communities in Nebraska.*

For more information about the grant and to sign up for e-news updates, visit [plantnebraska.org/ucf-grants](http://plantnebraska.org/ucf-grants).

## Become an NSA Organizational Member

The Organizational Membership level is designed for non-profits, small businesses, sole proprietorships, agencies and municipalities.

### Benefits:

- The opportunity to pre-order Spring Affair plants for the best selection
- Discounts at NSA plant sales
- Recognition in the NSA Annual Report
- Hort publications, e-newsletters and invitations to members-only events.

Scan the QR code, visit [plantnebraska.org/how-to-help](http://plantnebraska.org/how-to-help) or call Toby Burnham at (402) 472-2971 for more information.



# Celebrating 25 Years of GreatPlants

*A look back at our award winners from 1998-2023*

## Trees of the Year

- 2023—*Quercus imbricaria*, shingle oak
- 2022—*Ulmus americana* 'Princeton,' American elm
- 2021—*Celtis occidentalis*, common hackberry
- 2020—*Catalpa speciosa*, northern catalpa
- 2019—*Betula lenta*, sweet birch
- 2018—*Platanus occidentalis*, American sycamore
- 2017—*Quercus shumardii*, Shumard oak
- 2016—*Carpinus caroliniana*, American hornbeam
- 2015—*Quercus velutina*, black oak
- 2014—*Liriodendron tulipifera*, tuliptree
- 2013—*Quercus ellipsoidalis*, Hill's oak
- 2012—*Acer truncatum*, Shantung maple
- 2011—*Carya ovata*, shagbark hickory
- 2010—*Cladrastis kentukea*, American yellowwood
- 2009—*Cornus mas*, Cornelian cherry dogwood
- 2008—*Ostrya virginiana*, American hophornbeam
- 2007—*Aesculus glabra*, Ohio buckeye
- 2006—*Quercus muehlenbergii*, chinkapin oak
- 2005—*Ginkgo biloba*, ginkgo
- 2004—*Quercus macrocarpa*, bur oak
- 2002—*Gymnocladus dioicus*, Kentucky coffeetree
- 2001—*Taxodium distichum*, baldcypress
- 2000—*Cornus alternifolia*, pagoda dogwood
- 1999—*Quercus bicolor*, swamp white oak
- 1998—*Amelanchier xgrandiflora*, apple serviceberry



Top: shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*) trunk . Bottom left: Cornelian cherry dogwood (*Cornus mas*) flower. Bottom right: Shantung maple (*Acer truncatum*) leaves in the fall.



# Conifers of the Year

- 2023—*Pinus koraiensis*, Korean pine
- 2022—*Picea glauca* var. *densata*, Black Hills spruce
- 2021—*Pinus strobus*, eastern white pine
- 2020—*Pinus strobus* x *ayacahuite* 'Domingo,' Domingo pine
- 2019—*Picea abies*, Norway spruce
- 2018—*Pinus edulis*, pinyon pine
- 2017—*Picea glauca*, white spruce
- 2016—*Pinus ponderosa*, ponderosa pine
- 2015—*Pinus resinosa*, red pine
- 2014—*Abies koreana*, Korean fir
- 2013—*Pinus strobiformis*, border pine
- 2012—*Pseudotsuga menziesii* var. *glauca*, Douglas fir
- 2011—*Abies balsamea* var. *phanerolepis*, Canaan fir
- 2010—*Pinus cembra*, Swiss stone pine
- 2009—*Picea omorika*, Serbian spruce
- 2008—*Pinus bungeana*, lacebark pine
- 2007—*Abies concolor*, concolor fir



Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) fruit and needles.



# Grasses of the Year

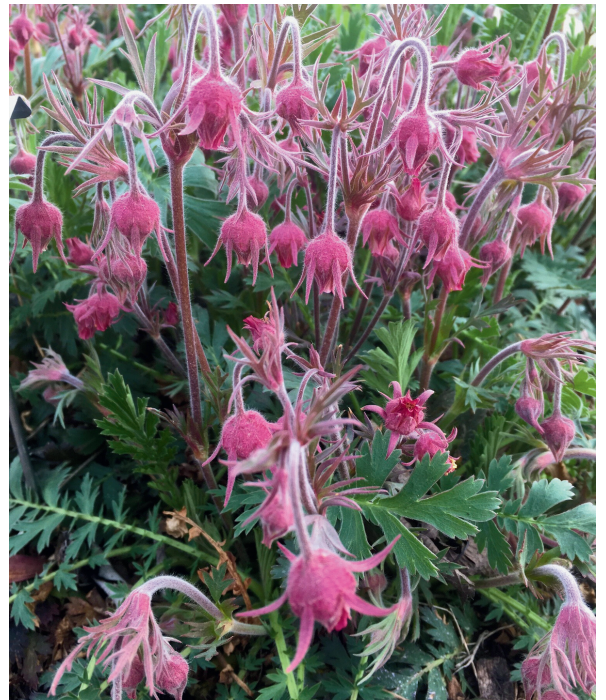
- 2023—*Carex flacca*, blue zinger sedge
- 2022—*Melinis nerviglumis*, ruby crystals grass
- 2021—*Miscanthus sinensis* 'Morning Light,' morning light maiden grass
- 2020—*Carex rosea*, rosy sedge
- 2019—*Carex pennsylvanica*, Pennsylvania sedge
- 2018—*Carex eburnea*, bristleleaf sedge
- 2017—*Andropogon gerardii*, big bluestem
- 2016—*Panicum virgatum* 'Dallas Blues,' Dallas blues switchgrass
- 2015—*Sporobolus wrightii*, giant sakaton
- 2014—*Carex grayi*, Gray's sedge
- 2013—*Schizachyrium scoparium* 'MinnBlue,' 'Blue Heaven' little bluestem
- 2012—*Panicum virgatum* 'Northwind,' northwind switchgrass
- 2011—*Carex muskingumensis*, palm sedge
- 2010—*Eragrostis trichodes*, sand lovegrass
- 2009—*Panicum virgatum* 'Shenandoah,' Shenandoah switchgrass
- 2008—*Bouteloua gracilis*, blue grama
- 2007—*Calamagrostis brachytricha*, Korean feather reed grass
- 2006—*Miscanthus sinensis* v. *purpurascens* 'Autumn Red,' autumn red miscanthus
- 2005—*Bouteloua curtipendula*, sideoats grama
- 2004—*Sorghastrum nutans*, Indiangrass
- 2003—*Sporobolus heterolepis*, prairie dropseed
- (1998 Perennial of the Year—*Schizachyrium scoparium*, little bluestem; moved from grasses)

Left top: eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*) needles in the winter; left bottom: rosy sedge (*Carex rosea*).

# Celebrating 25 Years of GreatPlants

## Perennials of the Year

- 2023—*Vernonia* 'Iron Butterfly' ironweed  
2022—*Anemone sylvestris*, snowdrop anemone  
2021—*Asclepias incarnata*, rosy milkweed  
2020—*Callirhoe involucrata*, purple poppy mallow  
2019—*Aster oblongifolius*, aromatic aster  
2018—*Pycnanthemum virginianum*, Virginia mountain mint  
2017—*Liatris ligulistylis*, meadow blazing star  
2016—*Oenothera macrocarpa* var *fremontii*, Fremont's primrose  
2015—*Thermopsis villosa*, Carolina lupine  
2014—*Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *speciosa*, showy black-eyed Susan  
2013—*Filipendula rubra* 'Venusta', queen of the prairie  
2012—*Chelone lyonii*, turtlehead  
2011—*Phlox divaricata*, woodland phlox  
2010—*Eupatorium maculatum* 'Gateway,' gateway Joe-Pye plant  
2009—*Amsonia hubrichtii*, narrowleaf bluestar  
2008—*Geum triflorum*, prairie smoke  
2007—*Solidago rugosa*, 'Fireworks,' fireworks goldenrod  
2006—*Pulsatilla species*, pasque flower  
2005—*Baptisia minor*, dwarf blue indigo  
2004—*Polygonatum multiflorum* 'Variegatum', var. Solomon's seal  
2003—*Echinacea species*, coneflower  
2002—*Geranium sanguineum*, cranesbill  
2001—*Penstemon species*, beardtongue  
2000—*Asclepias tuberosa*, butterfly milkweed  
1999—*Amorpha canescens*, leadplant

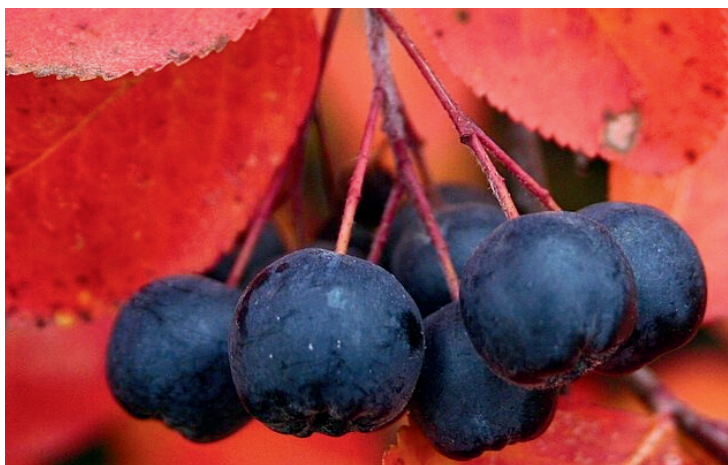


Top: beardtongue (*Penstemon grandiflorus*);  
bottom: prairie smoke (*Geum triflorum*); left:  
butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*).

# Shrubs of the Year

- 2023**—*Spirea betulifolia*, ‘Tor’ birchleaf spirea  
**2022**—*Philadelphus hybrid*, ‘Buckley’s quill’ mockorange  
**2021**—*Viburnum sargentii* ‘Chiquita,’ ‘Chiquita’ sargent viburnum  
**2020**—*Sambucus americana*, American elderberry  
**2019**—*Hamamelis vernalis*, vernal witchhazel  
**2018**—*Corylus americana*, American hazelnut  
**2017**—*Prunus besseyi*, ‘Pawnee Buttes’ western sandcherry  
**2016**—*Ceanothus americanus*, New Jersey tea  
**2015**—*Cephalanthus occidentalis*, buttonbush  
**2014**—*Callicarpa dichomata*, purple beautyberry  
**2013**—*Viburnum trilobum*, ‘Redwing’ American cranberrybush viburnum  
**2012**—*Viburnum dentatum var deamii*, Deam’s arrowwood viburnum

- 2011**—*Heptacodium miconioides*, seven-son flower  
**2010**—*Aesculus parvifolia*, bottlebrush buckeye  
**2009**—*Mahonia repens*, creeping mahonia  
**2008**—*Euonymus atropurpurea*, eastern wahoo  
**2007**—*Amelanchier alnifolia* ‘Regent,’ regent serviceberry  
**2006**—*Rosa glauca* (*R. rubrifolia*), redleaf rose  
**2005**—*Spirea fritschiana*, Korean spirea  
**2004**—*Ribes odoratum*, clove currant  
**2003**—*Viburnum prunifolium*, blackhaw viburnum  
**2002**—*Hypericum kalmianum*, kalm St. Johnswort  
**2001**—*Hydrangea quercifolia*, oakleaf hydrangea  
**2000**—*Symphoricarpos xchenaultii*, shenault coralberry  
**1999**—*Viburnum carlesii*, Koreanspice viburnum  
**1998**—*Aronia melanocarpa*, black chokeberry



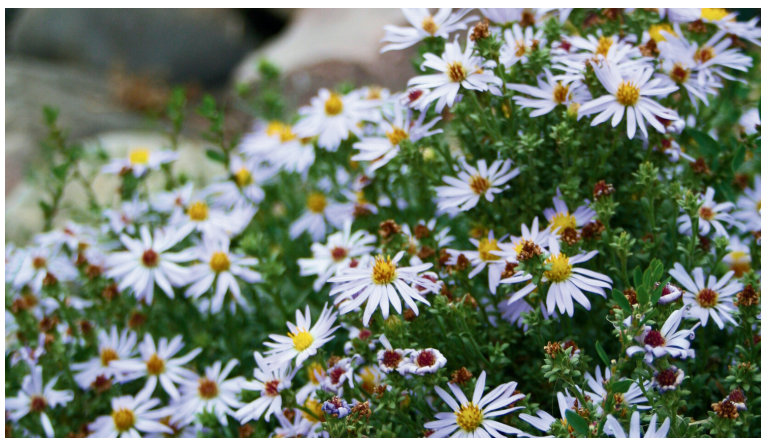
Clockwise from top left: black chokeberry fruit (*Aronia melanocarpa*), Koreanspice viburnum flower (*Viburnum carlesii*), Korean spirea (*Spirea fritschiana*) and oakleaf hydrangea flowers in fall (*Hydrangea quercifolia*).

# GreatPlants Releases & Introductions

## Releases

- 2014**—*Iris Spuria* 'Fontanelle' spuria iris  
**2013**—*Viburnum* 'Copper Ridges' viburnum  
**2012**—*Viburnum* 'Prairie Classic' viburnum  
**2011**—*Hibiscus moscheutos* 'Pink Clouds' hibiscus  
**2010**—*Euonymus carnosus*, fleshy-flowered spindletree;  
*Liatris microcephala* 'White Sprite,' liatris  
**2009**—*Monarda* 'Prairie Gypsy,' Prairie Gypsy monarda;  
*Eupatorium* 'Prairie Jewel,' Prairie Jewel eupatorium  
**2008**—*Dianthus* 'Wink,' Wink dianthus; *Quercus prinoides*,  
dwarf chinkapin oak; *Populus tremuloides* 'Prairie  
Gold,' Prairie Gold quaking aspen  
**2007**—*Caragana microphylla*, Mongolian silver spires  
littleleaf peashrub; *Calylophus serrulatus* 'Prairie Lode,'  
Prairie Lode sundrops  
**2006**—*Penstemon grandiflorus* 'Prairie Snow,' Prairie Snow  
penstemon; *Liatris pycnostachya* 'Eureka,' Eureka  
gayfeather; *Dianthus* 'Prairie Pink,' Prairie Pink  
dianthus; *Andropogon* 'Silver Sunrise,'™ big bluestem;  
*Clematis tenuiloba* 'Pixie Parasols,' Pixie Parasols  
clematis

- 2005**—*Penstemon grandiflorus* 'War Axe,' War Axe  
penstemon; *Penstemon grandiflorus* 'Prairie  
Splendor,' Prairie Splendor penstemon; *Fallopia*  
'Lemon Lace,' Lemon Lace vine; *Solidago*  
'WichitaMountains,' WichitaMountains  
goldenrod  
**2004**—*Scutellaria resinosa*, smoky hills skullcap;  
*Scabiosa superba* 'Mongolian Mist,' Mongolian  
Mist pincushion flower; *Allium senescens*  
'Mongolian Gem,' Mongolian Gem allium;  
*Sedum tatarowinii* 'Mongolian Stars,' Mongolian  
Stars sedum  
**2003**—*Juniperus virginiana* 'Taylor,' Taylor juniper  
**2002**—*Dalea purpurea* 'Stephanie,' Stephanie  
purple prairie clover  
**2001**—*Oenothera macrocarpa* 'Comanche  
Campfire,' Comanche Campfire primrose  
**2000**—*Callirhoe alcaeoides* 'Logan Calhoun,'  
Logan Calhoun poppy mallow  
**1999**—*Aster fendleri* 'My Antonia,' My Antonia  
aster



## Introductions

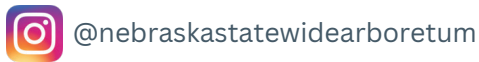
- 2003**—*Scutellaria scoridifolia* 'Mongolian Skies,'  
Mongolian Skies skullcap; *Tradescantia tharpaii*,  
dwarf spiderwort  
**2000**—*Clematis fremontii*, Fremont's clematis  
**1999**—*Clematis fruticosa* 'Mongolian Gold,'  
Mongolian Gold clematis



Left top: My Antonia aster (*Aster fendleri* 'My Antonia'); left bottom: Comanche Campfire primrose (*Oenothera macrocarpa* 'Comanche Campfire'). Above: dwarf spiderwort (*Tradescantia tharpaii*).

Nebraska Statewide Arboretum  
102 Keim Hall  
P.O. Box 830964  
Lincoln, NE 68583-0964

Non Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
UNL



[plantnebraska.org](http://plantnebraska.org)

Save the Date  
**Spring Affair 2024**  
April 25-27  
Lancaster Event Center | Lincoln

Preview Dinner & Sale  
April 25  
Tickets on sale in February.  
Check [plantnebraska.org/springaffair](http://plantnebraska.org/springaffair)  
for updates.



NEBRASKA STATEWIDE  
**Arboretum**