

Cool Plants for Cold Climates

Prepared for the Northwest Flower and Garden Show

February 8th, 2018, 5:45PM, Rainier Room

by Brenda C. Adams

Evaluating plants for their garden impact

As you consider a new plant for your garden, thinking in terms of artistic impact will help you focus on those characteristics that make a plant exceptional. Because foliage is with us throughout the growing season, its potential impact is great. If you make use of the qualities of foliage size, shape, texture, and color you can transform your artistic endeavors from simply pleasant to absolutely outstanding. Naturally, the color, size and make-up of the flowers will have a lot to do with how you feel about a given plant, but also consider the color and texture of its bark and stems. Equally important is the presence of interesting buds, seedpods, berries, and other fruit, as well as the overall form or architecture of the plant. Fragrance and motion are two powerful attributes to seek out. Each plant should be well-suited to the style of your garden and enhance its beauty. Most important, though, is that *you* find it charming and delightful.

Evaluating plants for their utility and dependability

For most cold climates gardeners the growing season is very short. As a result, plants that reveal their beauty as soon as the snow melts or that offer interesting displays beyond a killing frost are to be treasured. Those that bloom for a long time or that change with the season – thus adding year-round beauty – will contribute more to the quality of your garden. Powerful woody architecture, colorful or strongly textured bark and stems, and persistent bright berries that stand above the average snow level can add enormously to the winter landscape. A plant's ultimate size needs to be in scale with your space. If one of your goals is having an easy-to maintain garden, then well-behaved choices are a must. A new plant's horticultural needs should match the conditions of your environment so that it will remain healthy and vigorous without coddling.

“Cool Plants”

Aconitum x cammarum ‘**Bicolor**’, (bicolor monkshood), Z2-7, full sun to part shade, humus-rich, well-drained, mildly acidic soil, H 48-60", W 12-15"

Artemisia ludoviciana ‘**Valerie Finnis**’, (Western mugwort, white sage), Z3-9, full sun, well-drained, poor to moderately fertile, acidic to alkaline soil, H 24-36", W 24-36"

Astilboides tabularis, (shieldleaf), Z3-7, part shade to full shade, humus-rich, moist soil, H 36-48", W 42-48"

Astrantia major ‘**Hadspen Blood**’, (masterwort), Z3-9, full sun to part shade, humus-rich, moisture-retentive, mildly acidic soil, H 24-36", W 18-30"

Clematis integrifolia, (shrub clematis), Z3-9, full sun, moist, well-drained soil, H 24-30", W 24"

Dodecatheon pulchellum ssp. *alaskanum*, (shooting star) Z4-8, part shade in lower latitudes, full sun in northern latitudes, moist, well-drained, humus-rich soil, H 12", W 8-10"

Eryngium x zabelii ‘**Big Blue**’, (sea holly), Z2-9, full sun, lean, well-drained soil, drought OK, H 36-40", W 18-24"

Filipendula purpurea ‘**Elegans**’, (Japanese meadowsweet), Z4-7, full sun to part shade, moist, well-drained to somewhat boggy, humus-rich soil, H 36-42", W 24"; *F. rubra* ‘**Venusta**’, (queen of the prairie), Z3-8, H 8', W 4-6'

Geum ‘**Totally Tangerine**’, (avens), Z4-7, full sun to part shade, does well in most soils, H 30", H 18"

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Lewisia tweedyi, (Tweedy's lewisia), Z3-8, full sun, very fast draining, average soil, H 8", W 12-15"

Ligularia dentata x hessei 'Gregynog Gold', bigleaf ligularia, Z4-8, full sun to part shade, moderately fertile, reliably moist soil, H 3-5', W 3-4'; *L. dentata* 'Desdemona', 'Britt-Marie Crawford', or 'Othello'

Primula auricula, *P. florindae*, *P. marginata*, *P. waltonii*, *P. alpicola*, (primroses), Z3-8, full sun to part shade, moist, well-drained, humus-rich soil, sizes vary

Rheum palmatum 'Atrosanguineum', (ornamental rhubarb), Z3-8, full sun to part shade, moist, humus-rich soil, H 8', W 6'

Rodgersia podophylla 'Rotlaub', (bronze-leaf Roger's flower), Z3-9, sun in northern latitudes, part sun otherwise, richly-fertile, moist soil, H 32-36", W 3-4'

Sedum spectabile 'Autumn Fire', (autumn fire stonecrop), Z3-9, full sun or part shade, moderately fertile, well-drained soil, H 24-30", W 18-24". Also *S. spectabile* 'Purple Emperor', H 14-16", W 15"

Zigadenus elegans (death camas), Z4-9, full sun to part shade, fertile, well-drained soil, H 24-30", W 10-16"

Alopecurus pratensis 'Aureovariegatus' (golden foxtail grass), Z3-7, full sun to part shade, moist well-drained fertile soil, H 12-16", W 16-24"

Calamagrostis x acutiflora 'Eldorado' (golden feather reed grass), Z3-9, full sun to part shade, moist, well-drained, fertile soil, H 60-72", W 15-24"

Calamagrostis x acutiflora 'Overdam' and 'Avalanche', (variegated feather reed grass), Z3-9, full sun to part shade, moist, well-drained, fertile soil, H 50-60", W 15-24"

Deschampsia cespitosa 'Bronzeschleier', (bronze veil tufted hair grass), Z 3-9, full sun to part shade, tolerates soil from dry to moist, acidic to neutral, H 24-42", W 42-48"

Berberis thunbergii var. *atropurpurea* 'Crimson Pygmy', (crimson pygmy barberry) Z4-8, full sun to part shade, moist, well-drained soil, H 18-24", W 36-42"; *B. thunbergii* var. *atropurpurea* 'Crimson Velvet' H 54-72", W 48-84"; *B. thunbergii* 'Orange Rocket', H 54", W 24"

Salix purpurea 'Nana', (dwarf arctic willow), Z2-7, full sun to part shade, moist to wet soil, average fertility, H 48-72", W 48-60"

Sorbaria sorbifolia 'Sem', (false spirea sem), Z2-7, full sun to part shade, most soil types, H 36-48", W 42-60"

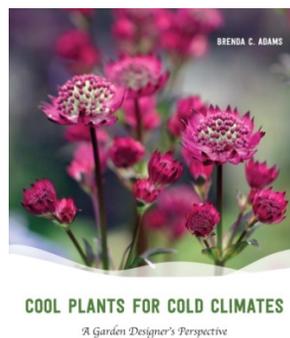
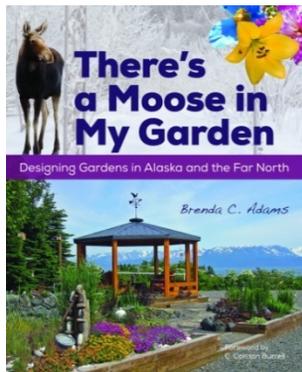
Spiraea fritschiana 'Pink Parasols', (pink parasols spirea), Z3-8, full sun, well-drained soil, H 24-36", W 24-48"

Hippophae rhamnoides, (seabuckthorne), Z3-8, full sun, well-drained, sandy, even salty soil, H12-20", W20-30"

Prunus mackii, (amur chokecherry) Z2-6, full sun to part shade, average moist, well-drained soil, H25-35', W20-25'

Prunus virginiana 'Bailey Select', (Bailey select Schubert cherry), Z2-7, full sun, average to medium fertile, moist, well-drained, acidic to alkaline soil, H 20-30', W 15-20'

To learn about more "Cool Plants" join me at the book signing for your copy of



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