

1997

DELAWARE  
ASSOCIATION OF NURSERYMEN  
*Plant of the Year*

This year marks Delaware Association of Nurserymen's Third Annual Plant of the Year selection.

The 1997 plants are: *Panicum virgatum* 'Heavy Metal' and *Clethra alnifolia* 'Hummingbird'. These plants were chosen because they are particularly well suited to thrive in Delaware.

*Panicum virgatum* 'Heavy Metal'

('Heavy Metal')

This versatile perennial grass can be planted for an accent in the smaller garden or massed for dramatic effect. Commonly known as Switch grass this American native is suitable for the diverse soils found in Delaware. A full sun location is preferred and will highlight the metallic-blue coloration in the leaf blades. Airy clouds of fine-textured, pinkish flowers and auburn seed heads are present from late summer into winter. The variety 'Heavy Metal' is a spectacular selection of Switch grass with erect foliage reaching 4 to 5 feet tall. Ornamental grasses provide quick effect, low water and maintenance requirements. For long season interest this grass can be planted in the perennial garden or shrub border as it adds color, form, and motion.



*Clethra alnifolia* 'Hummingbird'

('Hummingbird')

An excellent small shrub that combines deliciously fragrant flowers and glossy green foliage. This shrub can be utilized in foundation plantings, perennial borders, mass groupings, or slope stabilization. A dwarf selection discovered at Hummingbird Lake in Georgia, this unique variety of *Clethra* grows to 3 feet tall and spreads to approximately 5 feet wide. The compact nature of this shrub eliminates any need for pruning. Small white flowers form upright panicles 2 to 6 inches long for 4 to 6 weeks in late July into August. *Clethra* thrives on moist soils but can tolerate drier soils if planted in the shade. When combined with other moist-site plants such as *Magnolia virginiana*, *Viburnum nudum*, *Itea virginica*, *Chelone lyoni*, *Lobelia cardinalis*, *Phlox divaricata* a virtual plethora of colorful petals will appear.

UNIQUE PLANTS FOR

DELAWARE LANDSCAPES

