

1999

DELAWARE
ASSOCIATION OF NURSERYMEN
Plant of the Year

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

The 1999 plants are: *Gaura lindheimeri* 'Whirling Butterflies' and *Ilex verticillata* 'Sparkleberry'. These plants were chosen because they are particularly well suited to thrive in Delaware.



Photo by Naomi McCafferty

Gaura lindheimeri 'Whirling Butterflies'

As it's name, 'Whirling Butterflies,' implies, the delicate flowers of this summer blooming perennial look like small butterflies dancing in the wind. One inch, lightly rose-tinged, white blossoms are held erect above the basal foliage, while the spaghetti-thin stems nearly disappear in the landscape and let the flowers dance freely in the slightest breeze. The thin and informal habit of *Gaura* provides a contrast for heavier textured plants such as *Taxus* or *Ilex* shrubs and perennials such as *Echinacea purpurea* and *Phlox paniculata* says Jay Windsor of the University of Delaware. An unexpected virtue of this delicate looking plant is it's tenacious ability to tolerate heat and humidity. *Gaura* grows 24-30" tall and prefers rich, well-drained soil in full to partial sun and is well suited for gardens throughout the state of Delaware.

Ilex verticillata 'Sparkleberry'

This unique group of hollies are commonly known as Winterberry because of their distinguishing characteristic of showy, vibrant 1/4" fruit that persists in the winter. 'Sparkleberry's' rich green leaves of spring and summer are shed in the fall. A fresh blanket of snow makes a perfect framework on a winter's day for 'Sparkleberry's' abundant, glowing red berries held close to its multi-stemmed bare branches. This shrub grows 8-10' high and 6-8' wide and can be used in a group for mass effect, in a shrub border, or even near the water. It's easy to find a spot for Winterberries as they are native to Delaware and grow in average to wet soils and full sun to partial shade. 'Sparkleberry' is a female variety of deciduous holly that requires a male form be planted close by for best pollination. Many winterberry holly varieties have gender specific names, but if you still have questions ask your local landscape professional.

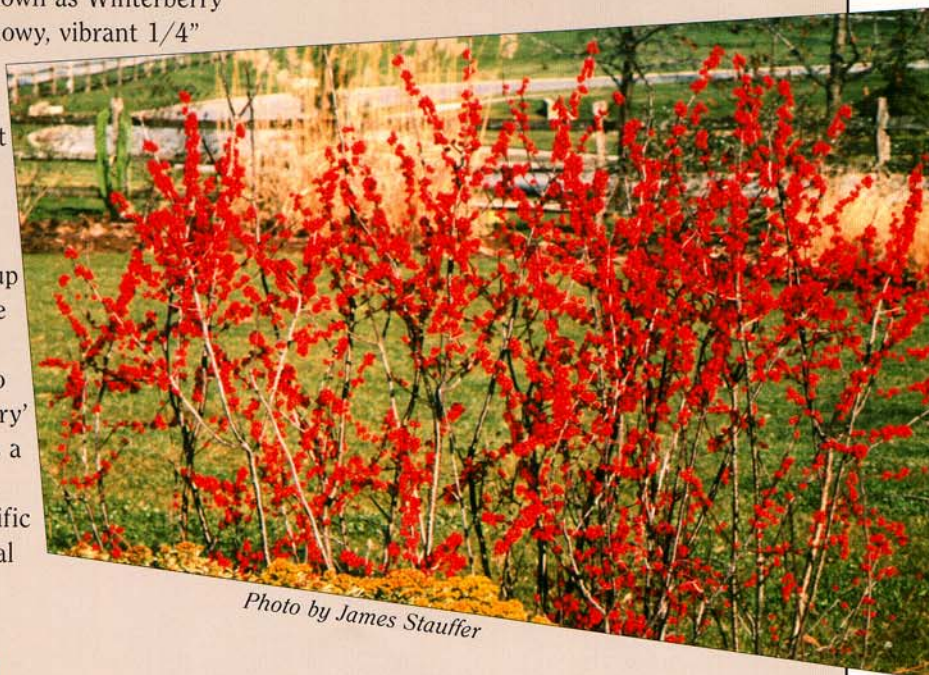


Photo by James Stauffer

UNIQUE PLANTS FOR
DELAWARE LANDSCAPES