

2000

DELAWARE

NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

Plant of the Year

This year marks Delaware Nursery & Landscape Association Sixth Annual Plant of the Year selection.

The 2000 Herbaceous plant is *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks'. The 2000 Woody plant is *Nandina domestica*. These plants were chosen because they are particularly well suited to thrive in Delaware.

Solidago rugosa 'Fireworks'

This native perennial brightens the landscape with blooms that "burst in mid air" like a fireworks display. The lacy clusters of golden blooms look like explosions atop a compact clump three to four feet high. This plant performs best in a sunny location in average to moist soils. The blooms start to appear in late summer and can be combined with Asters, Vernonia, Eupatorium, and ornamental grasses to create a spectacular fall display. 'Fireworks' will also entice butterflies into your garden. Also known as Goldenrod, they have been slow to gain popularity despite all of its useful features because it was confused with ragweed as the cause of hayfever. This plant is not the culprit but its showy blooms appear at the same time that the inconspicuous ragweed generates its pollen. Long ago Thoreau wrote that goldenrods capture "all the richness of the seasons and shed their mellow luster over the fields as though the declining summer's sun had bequeathed its hues to them."

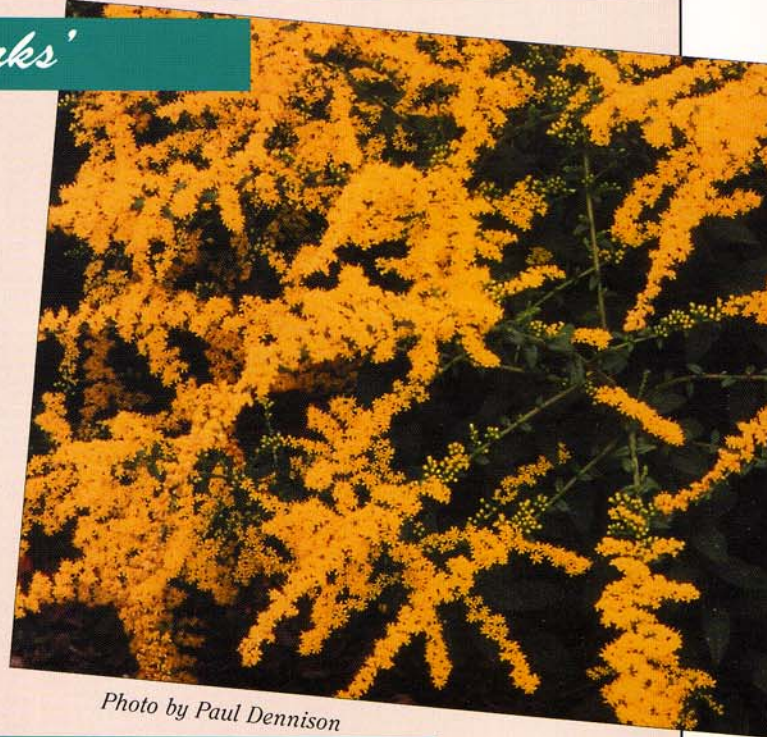
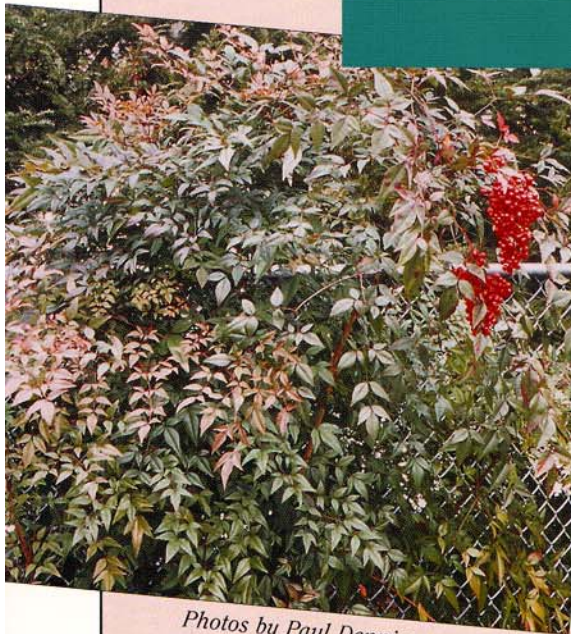


Photo by Paul Dennison

Nandina domestica

A name commonly given to this plant is Heavenly Bamboo, and although it is not a true bamboo it does have some heavenly characteristics. *Nandina domestica* is in the Barberry family of plants and was introduced from China in 1804. This broad-leaved evergreen shrub grows to six foot high with a distinctly vertical form. Leaves composed of many small leaflets emerge

coppery to purplish red and become blue-green with age and tend to assume a reddish tint in winter. Once established *Nandina* can endure extremes of soil and exposure but prefer moderately moist and fertile soils to make its best growth. Tiny white flower clusters atop the plant in June produce showy red berries in September that persist into winter. Upright branches and an unique leaf shape give this plant an exotic feel. *Nandina domestica* contrast nicely with course textured plants such as Hydrangea and Viburnum.



Photos by Paul Dennison

