

AUTUMN GLORY



In the garden with Wendy Matheson

Wet, wet, wet. No, I'm not extolling the virtues of a long forgotten boy band but still in the depths of despair at not having had the merest glimpse of summer.

We suffered endless days of disappointment where even the most green fingered were challenged with lack of high temperatures and endless wet and windy conditions. I now find myself in November taking some solace from the array of winter interest which can only be appreciated once the bloom and foliage have disappeared.

From a design point of view this season has little to detract one's attention so the form and basic structure of the garden are more important now than at any other time. In our gardens we like to keep as much of our perennial planting as possible (if it's still standing) not cutting back until early spring when new growth begins to push through. This enables the garden to keep some height and depth, stunning on sunny frosty days.

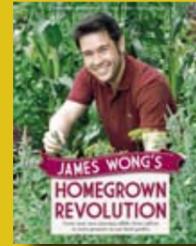


This month's must-have book

James Wong's *Homegrown Revolution*

ISBN: 978-0297867128

If you grow your own or have a fancy to start next season – this is a good winter read to prepare you for next year. A wonderful smorgasbord of interesting snippets on how to grow, what to grow, and ultimately recipes to use them in. This will be on my Christmas list!



The wonderful bark interest of the acer griseum, prunus serrula and betula "jacquemontii" are surpassed only by the selection of tawny browns, reds and fawns that grasses and seedheads provide in winter.

Some of my favourite plants for winter interest:

Aultheria mucronata – Pitcher shaped heather-like flowers appear in mid summer and are followed in autumn by masses of round white, pink or red berries, which last through the winter.

Cotoneaster x suecicus "Coral Beauty" – "Coral Beauty" is a rounded evergreen shrub with small, glossy dark green leaves and small white flowers followed by orange-red berries.



Cornus alba sibirica (dogwood) – A deciduous, upright-growing shrub with dark green leaves which bears clusters of small white flowers in spring and early summer, followed by small white berries. It is most commonly grown for its brilliant crimson stems, which are at their best on sunny winter days.

Hamamelis x intermedia "Diane" (witchhazel) – The leaves are alternate, broadly ovate in shape and they provide attractive autumn colour. The flowers are fragrant, spider-shaped, reddish with strap-shaped petals, clustered on the bare branches from winter to spring. The fruit is a horned capsule containing two shiny black seeds.



Abeliophyllum distichum (white forsythia) – A scrambling deciduous shrub with slender branches bearing dark green leaves and racemes of forsythia-like, fragrant white or pale pink flowers 1cm across.

Daphne mezereum – An upright deciduous shrub with narrow, dull green leaves and very fragrant white flowers before the leaves in late winter and early spring, followed by yellow berries.

Brassica oleracea "Acephala" (ornamental cabbage) – Long lived annuals that give a stunning display of shape and colour adding interest to any winter pots and baskets.



Arbutus unedo (strawberry tree) – Evergreen large shrub with small bell shaped creamy white flowers and red strawberry like fruit in autumn (pictured at top of page).

Clematis cirrhosa var. balearica – An evergreen climber

Winter gardens worth a visit

Watch out for the list of snowdrop festival events on the VisitScotland website – use the link: http://surprise.visitscotland.com/things_to_see_and_do/green-scotland/snowdrop_festival.aspx

All the wonderful Scottish botanics – Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh. Nestle in the warmth of the wonderful glasshouses and wonder at all the magical plants collected and nurtured from every corner of the planet.

with small, divided, dark green leaves and slightly fragrant, cup-shaped creamy-yellow flowers to 6cm wide, spotted purple within, in late winter and early spring; fluffy seed-heads

Clematis cirrhosa var. purpurascens "Freckles" – "Freckles" is a large evergreen climber with divided, lobed and toothed glossy dark green leaves tinged bronze in winter. Flowers 5cm in width, pale yellow heavily speckled with maroon within, during late autumn, winter or early spring. Good silky seed-heads.

Elaeagnus pungens "Maculata" – Small, silvery white flowers between October and January. Height 2.4–4.5m (8–15ft).

CONTACT WENDY

To find out more about winter gardening or to discuss any design projects please contact Wendy at: info@wmgardendesign.com