

Shrubs for Autumn Interest

Autumn is often thought of as a time for clearing out the old and preparing for the new, but it doesn't have to be this way! The following plants have been selected for their stunning autumn foliage, bright berries or fine flowers and will bring a blaze of colour, fragrance and excitement to your garden. The spectrum of interest in autumn is vast and there are plenty of other plants that will excel - this list merely scratches the surface and should be investigated further with your specific conditions in mind.

FOLIAGE



Acer palmatum. A beautiful, slow-growing, deciduous tree or shrub with ornate, palmate or finely cut leaves. Foliage turns fiery red or vibrant yellow in autumn. Prefers a shady, slightly acidic position. Heights vary.

Berberis sp, '*Barberry*'. A genus of versatile shrubs with tough spines and stunning, bright autumn foliage. The abundant, bright red berries that follow the yellow flowers are an extra autumn delight. Heights vary.



Cercis sp, '*Redbud*'/'*Judas Tree*'. A delightful shrub or small tree that displays beautiful pink flowers on naked stems in spring and then strong autumn colour from large, heart shaped leaves. A fantastic tree for all seasons. Eventual Height, up to 10m

Cotinus coggygria, '*Smoke Bush*'. Bushy shrub or small tree with a pretty mass of soft pink 'smoky' flowers in July. The foliage ranges from mid green to deep purple before turning luminous in autumn. Height and spread 2-3m



Euonymus alatus '*Winged Spindle*'. This otherwise unassuming shrub provides one of the most vibrant autumn displays. The waxy green leaves turn brilliant red before littering the floor with colour. The display comes and goes quickly, but it's worth it for the drama. H 2m

Fothergilla sp. An attractive, hardy shrub with conspicuous spikes of white, sweetly scented flowers in May. In autumn, the mid green leaves can turn vibrant yellow or deep-scarlet. Requires a lime-free soil in sun or partial-shade. Height 1-2m



Hamamelis sp '*Witch Hazel*'. A small, deciduous tree with striking autumn colour, ranging from deep purple to bright yellow. In winter wispy clusters of delicately scented flowers appear on bare stems. H 2-4m

Hydrangea quercifolia, '*Oak Leaved Hydrangea*'. An excellent shrub with large, lobed leaves that turn from mid green to deep bronze in Autumn. From summer to autumn large panicles of white flowers are held above the foliage. Height 2m



Itea 'Henry's Garnet'. An arching deciduous shrub with dark green leaves that turn deep burgundy and orange in autumn. Creamy white, fragrant flowers are borne in summer. Prefers slightly acidic soil and partial shade. 1-3m

Nandina domestica, '*Heavenly Bamboo*'. An unusual, informal shrub with long, bamboo-like stems and narrow, semi-evergreen leaves that turn rich crimson through autumn and winter. New growth is flushed red and white flower spikes turn to red berries – a plant for every season. Height 4-6ft.



Rhus typhina '*Stag's Horn Sumach*'. A large, suckering shrub renowned for its bright orange and red autumn colouring and furry crimson spikes of tiny fruit. The velvety new shoots are another attraction, but not when they appear in the middle of your lawn. Height 2 - 3m

FLOWERS

Abelia x grandiflora. An arching, evergreen shrub with small, glossy leaves and a smothering of pinky-white, tubular flowers from mid summer to autumn. Grow in full sun and good drainage, away from cold winds. Height 3m



Arbutus unedo '*Strawberry Tree*'. A handsome, evergreen tree with bell like ivory flowers from October to December. Red balls of Strawberry-like fruits from the previous year ripen at the same time. Height 8ft.

Camellia sasanqua. An unusual version of the classic evergreen shrub; sasanqua has smaller leaves than its cousin and a profusion of small pink or white flowers from mid to late Autumn. Height 3-6m



Caryopteris x clandonensis A small, deciduous, herb-like shrub with soft, silvery, aromatic leaves and spikes of violet flowers from late summer. This delicate shrub is fully hardy, but prefers a sheltered site and good drainage. Height 1m

Ceratostigma sp. '*Hardy Plumbago*'. Late summer brings beautiful, clear blue flowers on a bed of mid green leaves that tint red in autumn. Even the russet seed-heads catch the eye on this popular shrub. Height 1m



Clerodendrum bungei, '*Glory Flower*'. A deciduous, suckering shrub with dark green, toothed leaves and very fragrant cushions of small pink flowers from late summer. This unusual shrub deserves a wider audience. H 1-2m

Elaeagnus x ebbingei. This tough, vigorous shrub will quickly form a thick screen of silver-green leaves. Mature shrubs produce tiny, white flowers which have a sweet, heady fragrance. Height 4m



Rosa cultivars. There is little left to say about this most popular of shrubs. Look for a modern, repeat flowering cultivar and, in a sheltered spot in London, you'll have beautiful flowers all year.

Viburnum tinus, '*Laurustinus*'. A solid, versatile shrub with dark evergreen leaves. Pink buds sit prettily through autumn and open to white scented flowers through winter, ovoid, metallic-blue fruits follow. H 2.5m.



Skimmia japonica. A short, ericaceous shrub with waxy, evergreen leaves. Spikes of tiny, tight red bud in autumn that break into fragrant, white flowers in late winter. Many varieties show red berries with the flowers.

BERRIES

Cotoneaster sp. This tough, familiar shrub comes in many shapes and sizes, but in autumn and winter they are all covered in bright red berries. Different species can be tall, arching shrubs, wall trained, used as ground cover, etc. Feed the birds and your eyes and feel happier for it! Heights vary.



Pyracantha sp. A spiky shrub that can be wall trained, trimmed to a hedge or left to grow wild. Summer sees a mass of white foamy flowers, but autumn brings the main attraction: Bright red, orange or yellow berries that cover the shrub from October onwards.

Callicarpa bod' giraldui. A deciduous shrub with mid green leaves and extraordinary pink/purple flowers in summer. Autumn brings bronze foliage and almost unreal clusters of beadlike, pink/purple berries. H 3m



Gaultheria sp. A dense thicket of a shrub with small, spiky, glossy, leaves and large white, pink or crimson berries on the female plants. A male plant is needed to continue fruiting. This plant likes partial shade and moist, slightly acidic soil. Height 1m

Ilex sp 'Holly': The humble Holly offers some of the best berries around and there are many varieties and berry colours to choose from, but not all get berries – make sure you choose one that does!



Rosa sp. Roses have many charms but the hips are often overlooked. Species roses like rugosa and moyesii have fantastic hips, as do many of the cultivars.

Skimmia japonica subs reevesiana. See details in 'Flowers' section. This subspecies has a particularly fine crop of berries.



Symphoricarpos sp *Snowberry*: A rangy, deciduous shrub with extraordinary white or pale pink berries in autumn and winter. This tough shrub is tolerant of poor, thin soil and pollution – a London plant! Height 1-2m

