



Top 50 East Asian



Plants for Pollinators

Oriental Garden plants you can grow in the UK
to help our pollinating insects

List Curated by Thomas McBride

From research data collected and collated at the
National Botanic Garden of Wales

NB: Butterflies and Moths are not studied at the NBGW so any data on nectar plants
beneficial for them is taken from Butterfly Conservation





Creating a Japanese or East Asian-inspired Garden

A Japanese or East Asian Garden features one of the most tranquil styles of modern planting. Usually featuring plenty of trees, the garden offers shade and serenity from the hot sunshine often with calming water features and a desaturated colour palate. There are also styles that feature Rhododendrons more heavily which tend to be a bit brighter. This list provides the very best native East Asian plants to create your very own piece of the orient.

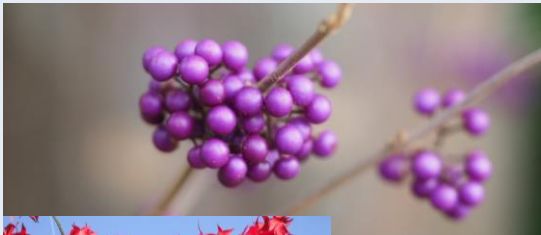


Planting Style



Some of the most iconic plants in a Japanese garden are not particularly pollinator friendly but may be used alongside lots of the plants from this list in order to achieve a stunning effect as well as a haven for wildlife. Japanese Maples do flower but are mostly pollinated by small flies as their flowers are very discrete and small. Mosses, grasses, bamboo, sedges and ferns also feature very heavily in traditional styles to create a peaceful backdrop of greenery. These are an important part of a garden eco-system so may be planted but it is important not to solely plant these if you want to attract insects.

One of the very iconic East Asian plants is the cherry tree. There are many fantastic species to plant but only one features in this list. They take quite a few years to mature but it is very much worth it. An East-Asian inspired garden will take years to perfect but can provide a serenity that cannot be achieved in other planting styles.



Guide to using these pages:

Map

Maps depict the native area of the plant (in green)
They also show areas the plant is naturalised (in purple)

All maps shown are derived from 'Plants of the World Online'; courtesy of Kew Gardens

Flowering Period
(this is when it is good for pollinators!)

Plant Family

Growing habit and mature size of the plant

Latin Binomial Name

Aconitum carmichaeli

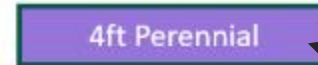
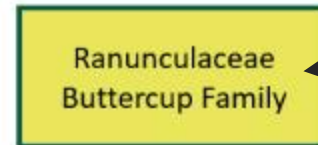
Common English Name

Chinese Wolfsbane

Photograph of the plant in flower



Insect groups known to favour the nectar of this plant

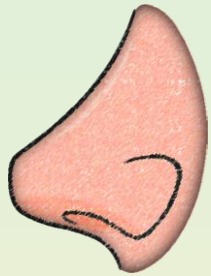


Useful knowledge or warnings about the plant

RHS AGM cultivars of this species (or a related species occasionally)

Key to these Pages

Additional information on these garden plants



The flowers and/or leaves have a Pleasant scent

This plant would only be suitable for meadow-style planting



Plant is often used in traditional Herbal Remedies



The plant has edible parts that are commonly eaten or used in cooking



Warnings



Plant tissue is highly toxic if ingested



Sap may cause irritation (Wash hands after touching or avoid touching)

Temperature

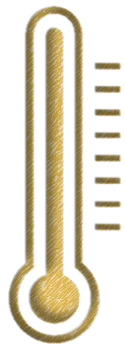
Some of the plants listed in our Top 200 are not fully hardy in all or some parts of the United Kingdom.

Plants without a thermometer symbol are fully hardy in the severest UK Winter; equating to **H5** or hardier.

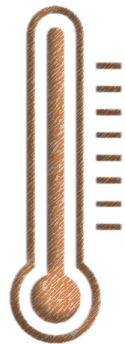
Plants with a coloured thermometer symbol are hardy to varying degrees as follows:



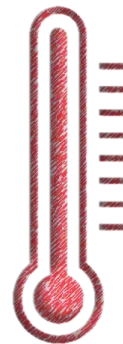
Almost Hardy
(H4)



Half-Hardy
(H3)



Not Frost Hardy
(H2)



Not Hardy
(H1)

RHS Hardiness Scale

H1a	-	Above 15°C
H1b	-	Minimum 10°C
H1c	-	Minimum 5°C
H2	-	Minimum 1°C
H3	-	Minimum -5°C
H4	-	Minimum -10°C
H5	-	Minimum -15°C

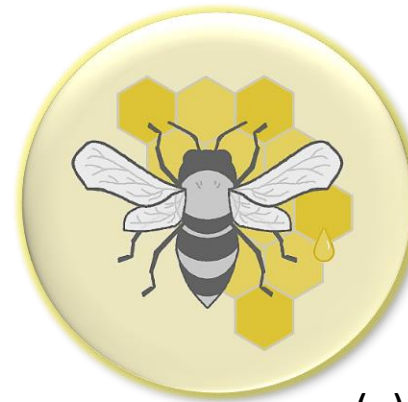
Pollinators

Our data on pollinators has been collected from studies spanning over a decade. Pollinator symbols appear when plants are proven to be good nectar plants for certain insects.

It should be noted that all bee and hoverfly data is ours but lepidoptera data is taken from Butterfly Conservation.

Our data spans a wide range of different insect species. For simplicity, these species have been condensed into six easy icons to represent them:

- | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| a) Honeybees | c) Bumblebees | e) Moths |
| b) Hoverflies | d) Butterflies
(Includes Moths) | f) Solitary Bees |



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



(e)



(f)

Aconitum carmichaeli

Chinese Wolfsbane



Photograph from Mount Venus Nursery



'Arendsii'
'Kelmscott'

Late Summer
- Early Autumn

Ranunculaceae
Buttercup Family

4ft Perennial

Actaea simplex

Baneberry



'Brunette'
'James Compton'



Late Summer
- Early Autumn

Ranunculaceae
Buttercup Family

4ft Perennial


Actinidia tetramera

Rosy Crab-Apple Kiwi



Var. maloides



Spring 

Actinidiaceae
Kiwi Family

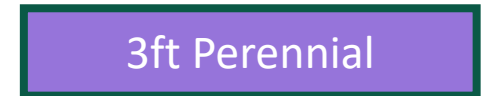
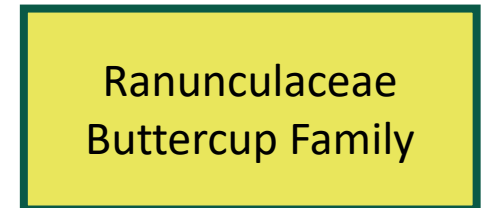
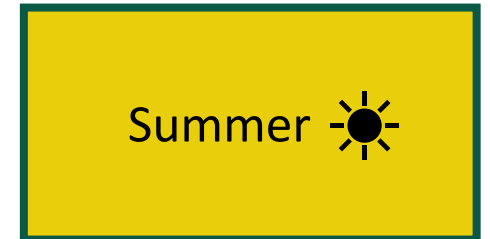
12ft Climber

Anemone hupehensis var. *japonica*

Japanese Anemone



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Sen Ito



Astilbe chinensis

False Goat's-beard



'Purpurlanze'
'Superba'

RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

Summer ☀

Saxifragaceae
Saxifrage Family

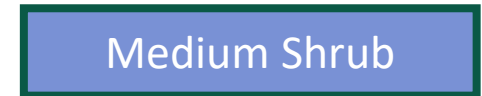
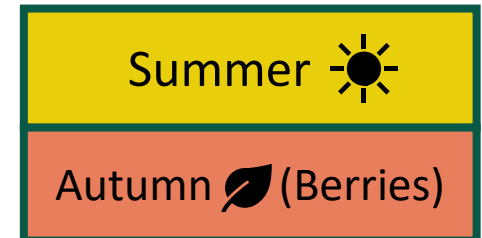
3ft Perennial

Callicarpa bodinieri

Bodinier's Beautyberry



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Dietmut Tejjeman-Hansen



Camellia japonica

Japanese Camellia



'Hagoromo'
'Pink Perfection*'

RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

Spring

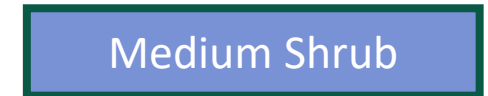
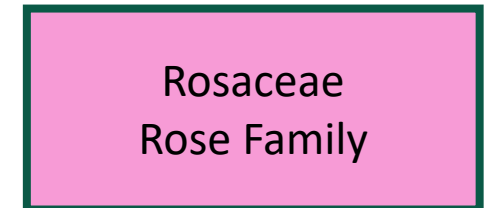
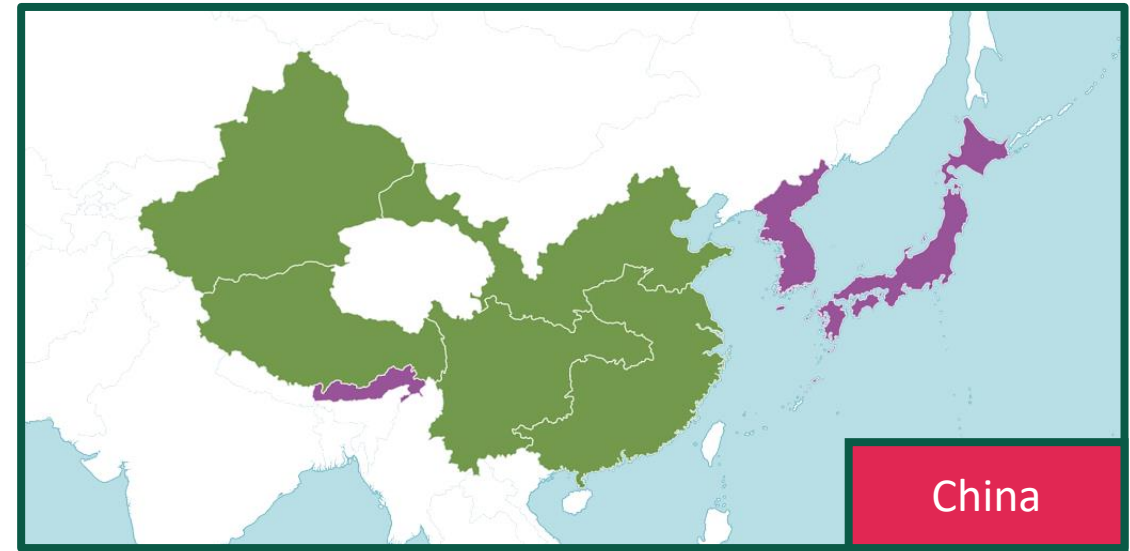
Theaceae
Tea Family

Medium Shrub

* Fully double flowered cultivars are not good for pollinating insects so try to buy single flowers (see photo) when possible.

Chaenomeles speciosa

Chinese Quince



Corydalis flexuosa

Chinese Blue Corydalis



'Blue Panda'
'Purple Leaf'



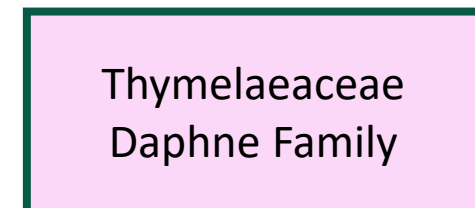
Spring 

Papaveraceae
Poppy Family

2ft Perennial

Daphne bholua

Nepalese Daphne



Deutzia gracilis

Japanese Snow Flower



Mid Spring
- Early Summer

Hydrangeaceae
Hydrangea Family

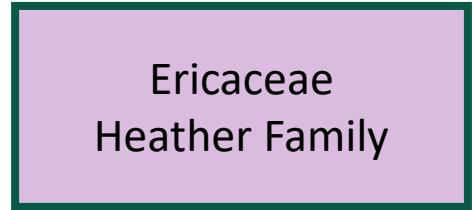
Medium Shrub

Enkianthus perulatus

Dodan-tsutsuji



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Ume 4



Fatsia japonica

Japanese Aralia



- Species -
'Variegata'



Autumn 

Araliaceae
Ivy Family

Medium Shrub

Geranium wlassovianum

Siberian Cranesbill



Photograph from Wikipedia (CC) Jamain

None



Midsummer
- Early Autumn

Geraniaceae
Cranesbill Family

2ft Perennial

Hamamelis mollis

Chinese Witch-hazel



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Wendy Cutler



Heptacodium miconioides

Seven Son Flower Tree



Photograph from Flickr (CC) F. D. Richards



- Species -

Late Summer
- Late Autumn

Caprifoliaceae
Honeysuckle Family

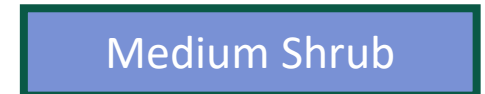
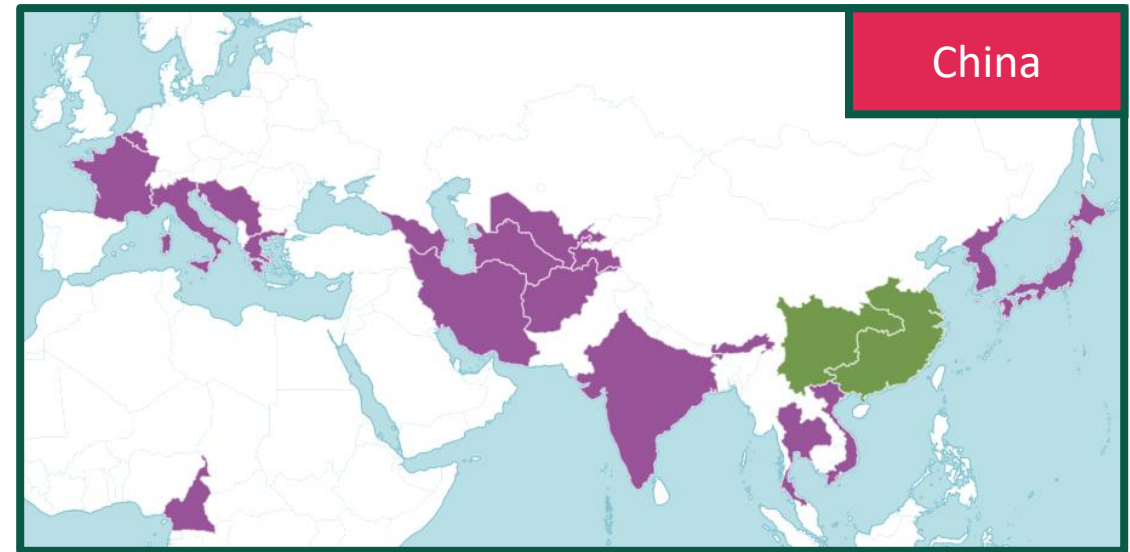
Medium Tree

Hibiscus syriacus

Rose Mallow



Photograph from Flickr by Toshikiro Gamo



Hosta sieboldiana Syn. *H. fortunei*

Giant Blue Plantain-lily



Var. aureomarginata
'Frances Williams'



Summer ☀

Asparagaceae
Asparagus Family

2ft Perennial

Hosta ventricosa

Blue Plantain-lily



Photograph from Flickr (CC) C T Johansson



- Species -
'Aureomarginata'



Summer ☀

Asparagaceae
Asparagus Family

2ft Perennial

Hydrangea anomala

Climbing Hydrangea



ssp. petiolaris

Summer ☀

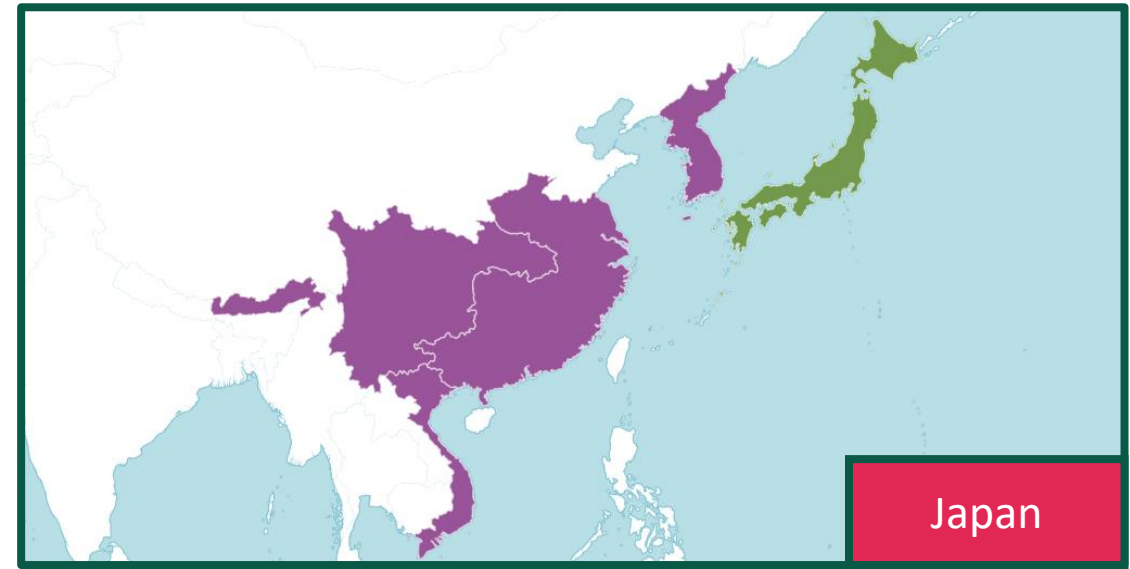
Hydrangeaceae
Hydrangea Family

10ft+ Climber



Hydrangea macrophylla

Large-leaf Hydrangea



'Hanabi' 'Zorro'
'Quadricolour'



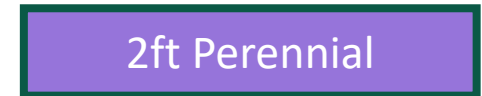
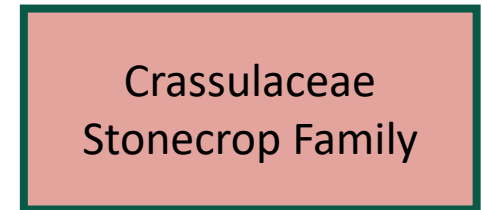
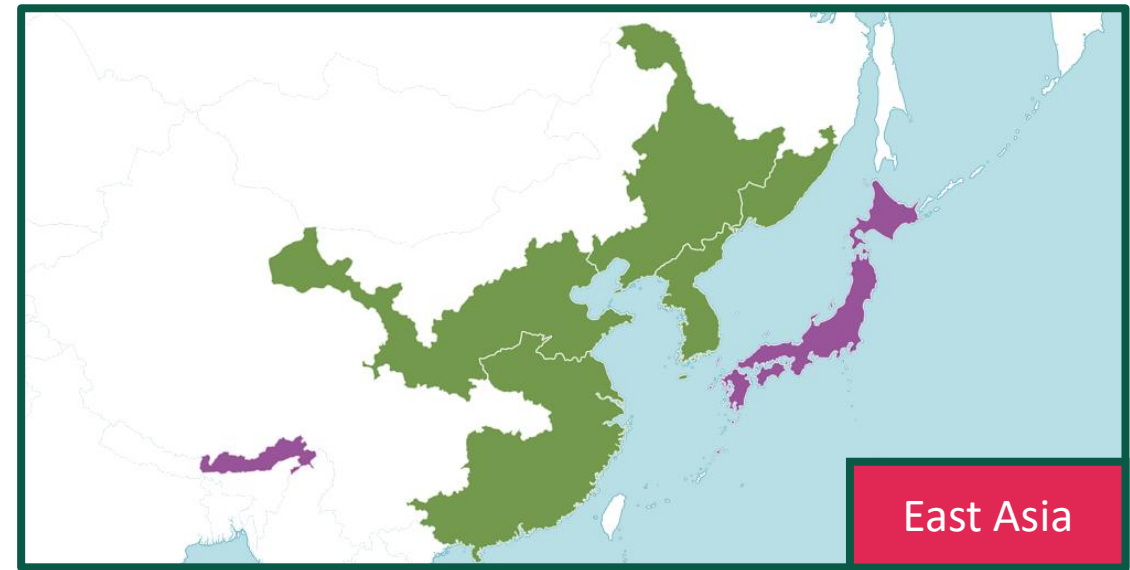
Summer ☀

Hydrangeaceae
Hydrangea Family

Medium Shrub

Hylotelephium spectabile

Showy Stonecrop, Sedum



Kerria japonica

Japanese Marigold-bush



Photograph from Flickr (CC) A. Qiao



'Golden Guinea'
'Pleniflora*'

Late Spring
- Midsummer

Rosaceae
Rose Family

Medium Shrub

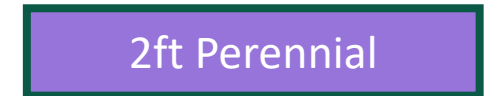
* Double flowered cultivars are not good for most pollinating insects so try to buy single flowers when possible

Lamprocapnos spectabilis

Bleeding Heart

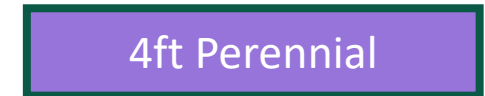


Photograph from Flickr (CC) Mark Wordy



Ligularia stenocephala

Narrow-headed Leopardplant



Ligustrum sinense

Chinese Privet Bush



Photograph from Flickr (CC) A. Qiao



Related species: *L. lucidum*

'Tricolor'
'Excelsum Superbum'



Midsummer
- Early Autumn

Oleaceae
Olive Family

Medium Shrub

Lilium regale

Regal Lily



- Species -



Summer ☀

Liliaceae
Lily Family

6ft Bulbous

Lilium lancifolium

Tiger Lily



Related sp:
L. pardalinum

RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

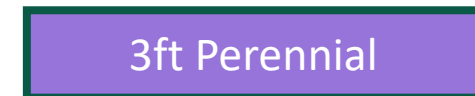
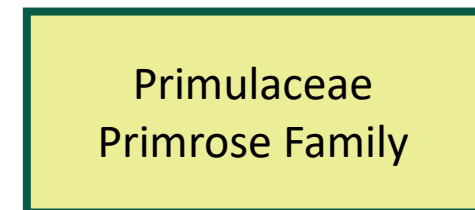
Summer ☀️

Liliaceae
Lily Family

4ft Bulbous

Lysimachia clethroides

Gooseneck Loosestrife



Magnolia kobus

Kobus Magnolia



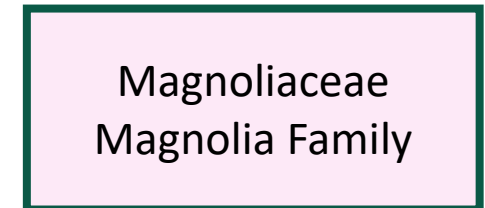
Photograph from Flickr (CC) Mark Kent



None



Spring



Magnoliaceae
Magnolia Family



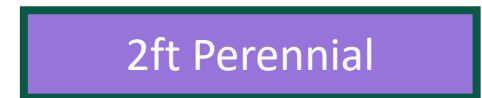
Small Tree

Meconopsis quintuplinervia

Harebell Poppy



Photograph from Flickr (CC) T. Ma



Paeonia delavayi

Delavay's Paeony



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Leonora Enking



China

'Black Pirate'
- Species -



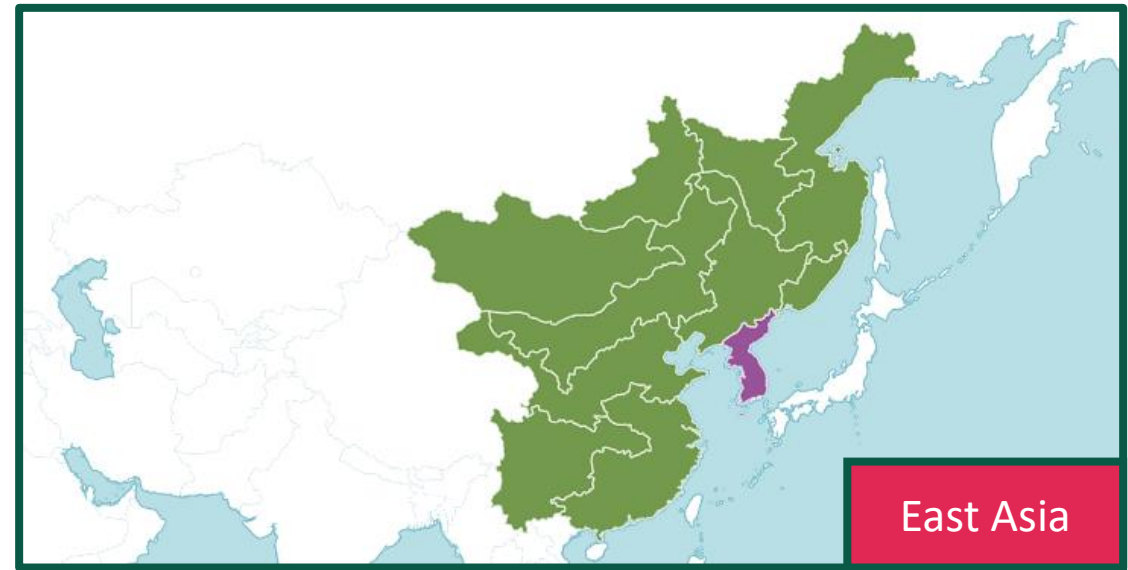
Late Spring
- Early Summer

Paeoniaceae
Paeony Family

3ft Perennial

Paeonia lactiflora

Chinese Paeony



'Bowl of Beauty'
'Miss America'



Late Spring
- Early Summer

Paeoniaceae
Paeony Family

3ft Perennial

Pieris japonica

Japanese Andromeda Bush



'Blush' 'Purity'
'Mountain Fire'



Spring 

Ericaceae
Heather Family

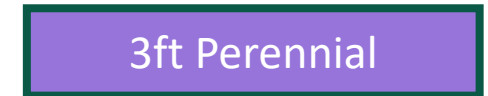
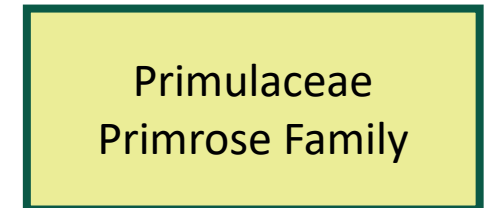
Small Shrub

Primula secundiflora

Chinese Pink Cowslip

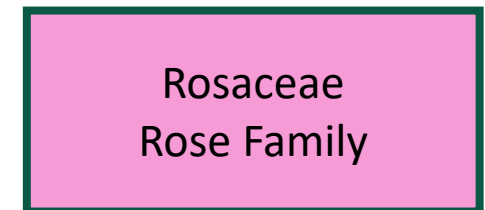


Photograph from Flickr (CC) WunDoroo



Prunus incisa

Fuji Cherry



Rheum palmatum

Ornamental Rhubarb



'Bowles Crimson'
'Savill'



Summer ☀

Polygonaceae
Knotweed Family

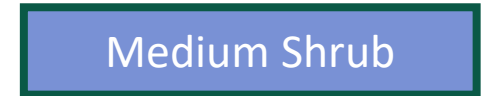
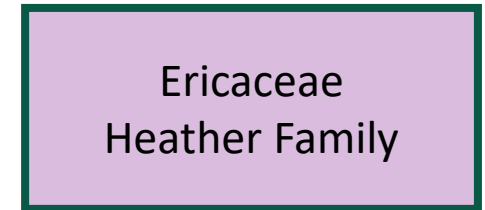
6ft Large Perennial

Rhododendron hippophaeoides

Sichuan Blue Rhododendron



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Plant Image Library



Rhododendron yakushimanum

Yakushima Rhododendron



Photograph from Flickr (CC) A Qiao



'Koichiro Wada'
'Hachmann's Polaris'



Spring 

Ericaceae
Heather Family

Medium Shrub

Rosa rugosa

Japanese Rose



'Fru Dagmar Hastrup'
'Scabrosa'



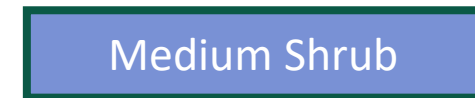
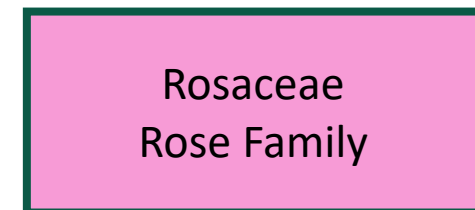
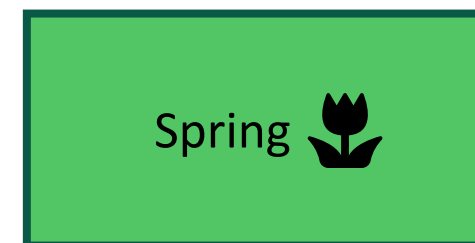
Midsummer
- Early Autumn

Rosaceae
Rose Family

Medium Shrub

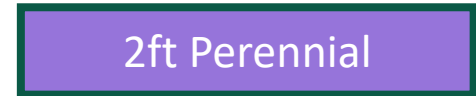
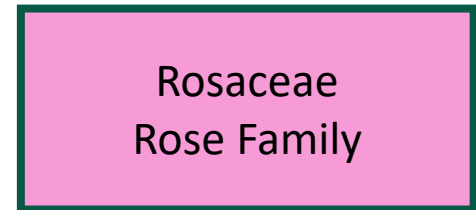
Rosa xanthina

Yellow Manchu Rose



Sanguisorba hakusanensis

Lilac Squirrel Flower



Skimmia japonica

Japanese Skimmia



Photograph from Wikipedia (CC) Wilhelm Zimmerling



'Fragans' 'Rubella'
'Nymans'



Spring 

Rutaceae
Rue Family

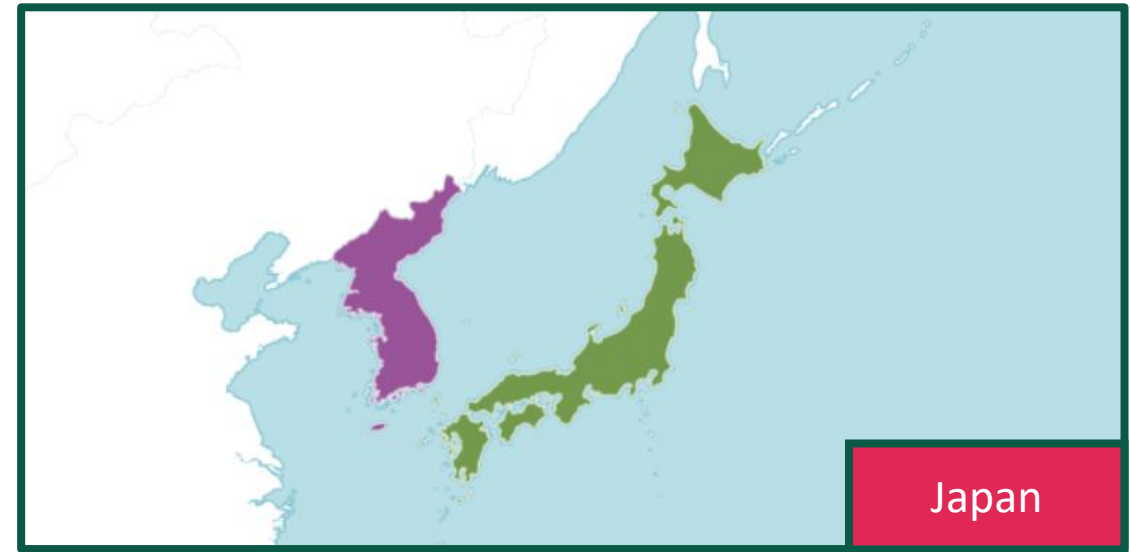
Medium Shrub

Spiraea japonica

Japanese Spiraea



Photograph from Flickr (CC) BeautifulCataya



'Candlelight'
'Dart's Red'



Summer ☀

Rosaceae
Rose Family

Medium Shrub

Stachyurus chinensis

Chinese Spiketail



Photograph © Thomas McBride

'Celina'
'Joy Forever'

The logo for the RHS Award of Garden Merit, featuring a green trophy cup inside a circular border with the text "RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT" and a registered trademark symbol. To the right is a stylized tree icon.

Late Winter
- Mid Spring

Stachyuraceae
Spiketail Family

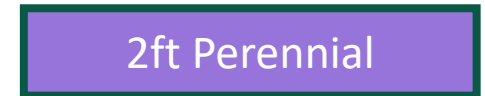
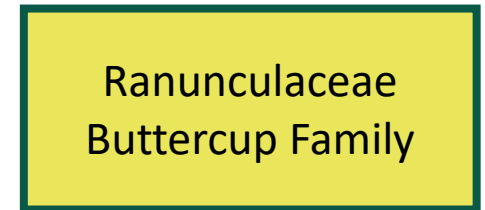
Medium Shrub

Thalictrum rochebruneanum

Lavender-mist Meadow-Rue



Photograph from Wikipedia (CC) Michael Wolf



Tricyrtis formosana

Taiwanese Toad Lily



Weigela florida

Garden Weigela



'Alexandra'
'Variegata'



Late Spring
- Midsummer

Caprifoliaceae
Honeysuckle Family

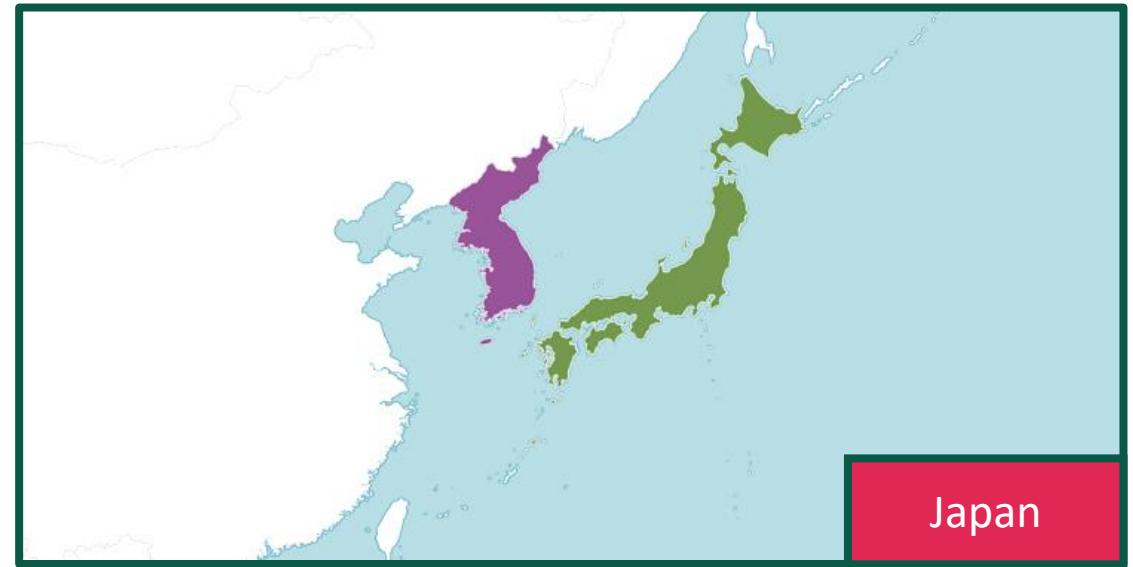
Medium Shrub

Wisteria floribunda

Japanese Wisteria



Photograph from Wikipedia (CC) Forest & Kim Starr



'Domino' 'Rosea'
'Lawrence'



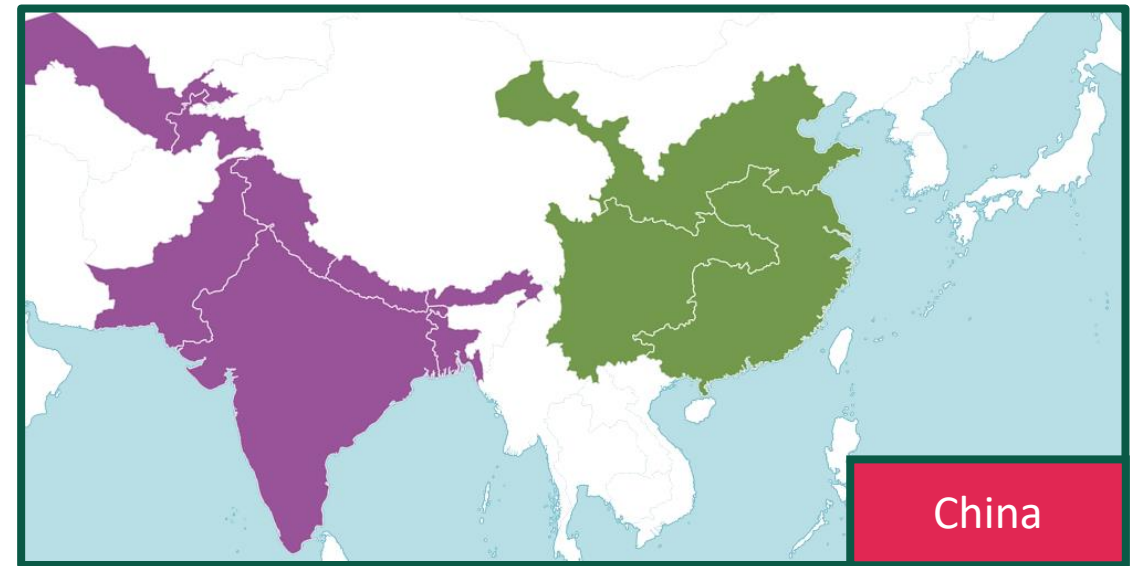
Summer ☀

Fabaceae
Legume Family

10ft+ Climber

Wisteria sinensis

Chinese Wisteria



'Amethyst' 'Jako'
'Prolific'



Mid Spring
- Early Summer

Fabaceae
Legume Family

10ft+ Vine