



Hemerocallis 'El Desperado'

Growin' Newz

Practical Knowledge for the Home Gardener: Deer Resistant Perennials

Troubled by deer in your garden? There's still hope yet! Read on to find out how to have a beautiful garden despite the deer.

Deer Resistance. A quick search on Google yields approximately 55,700 articles on the subject, written by people across the United States, many speaking from their own personal experiences with deer. The amount of information might seem overwhelming at first, until you sort through it and begin to realize that much of it is contradictory. Then it becomes *mindboggling!*

Here's the problem. Not all deer like to eat the same plants. There are many different kinds of deer with different appetites, and those from the western or central United States don't necessarily like to eat the same things as those from the eastern part of the country. In fact, what deer eat fluctuates with the availability of alternative foods, the size of the deer population, and other environmental factors. Therefore, there can never be one definitive list of deer resistant plants that works for *every* American gardener *every* year. There simply is no such thing as a *deer proof* plant. Like humans, deer have certain plants they prefer, but will eat **anything** if they are hungry enough.

Why have deer become such a problem for American gardeners? According to Paul Curtis, a wildlife specialist at Cornell University, as suburbia expands and more Americans garden on semi-rural land, deer come into contact with humans so often that they're no longer afraid of us. One gardener reported watching a huge buck jump right into her backyard pond, 20 feet from her house, to get a taste of her apparently *delicious* waterlilies! The simple fact is that as humans continue to claim rural and suburban land as their own, deer are being displaced and their natural habitats destroyed. As the deer population grows and their predators decrease, reports of deer damage to our property and gardens will only get worse. And since deer are creatures of habit, once they determine that your garden is a safe place to eat, they'll be back, maybe next time *with friends*.

What can you do about it? The general consensus seems to be that the best way to keep deer from eating your plants is to keep them out of the garden altogether by means of some sort of physi-

cal barrier. Deer fencing, which must be at least 8 feet tall to be effective, is now readily available from many gardening companies and home improvement stores. The cost and hassle of installation along with the obvious aesthetic drawbacks make this a less desirable solution, but may be worth it if deer browsing is a serious problem in your area.

Various types of natural and manmade repellants have also been tried with some success.



Most work by emitting an unpleasant odor or by coating plants with a nasty tasting substance. Repellants usually require frequent reapplication, however, and sometimes the deer just ignore or learn to live with them. Alternatively, you could try getting a big dog

and let it chase the deer out of the yard, but there's no guarantee Rover won't tromp down your daisies anyway!

It turns out that using deer resistant plants is the most cost effective, least time consuming and frustrating, most aesthetically pleasing way to keep deer out of the garden. After all, deer resistant plants don't *cost* anymore than ones deer find most delectable. It's just a matter of figuring out which ones they won't eat.

As a general rule, deer **do not like** plants with the following characteristics:

- Fragrant foliage, stems, or flowers
- A bitter taste
- A coarse, tough, hairy, or prickly texture
- Milky or sticky sap

They **do like** plants with large and/or succulent foliage, stems, or flowers.

Deer rely on their sense of smell to tell them which plants are safe and good to eat. Confuse them by planting lots of aromatic plants together and they'll almost certainly dine elsewhere. Or try hiding your favorite **non**-deer resistant plants in a patch of ones

New Foilage Plants To Brighten Your Landscape

P*hysocarpus* **SUMMER WINE™** is an easy way for gardeners to add dramatic, dark purple foliage to the home landscape. Even beginning gardeners will have success with this easy-to-grow, adaptable plant. More experienced horticulturists will appreciate **Summer Wine's** flexibility in the landscape. Although full sun is needed for the most intense color, this new *Physocarpus* will tolerate most soil conditions, and requires little pruning or other maintenance. Simply plant it and watch it grow!

A compact version, 4-5' T x 3-4' W, of *Physocarpus* with dark wine, fine-textured foliage and pink-white blooms in early summer. While it's a strong grower, it's more well-behaved. Beautiful next to yellow or dark green plants. This



is a dramatic improvement over other Ninebarks! Similar to parent, Diablo, but is more compact & is well-branched enough to grow in a container. Gets its fine texture from the other parent, *Physocarpus* 'Nana'. The peeling bark of Ninebark is attractive.

Consider planting *Physocarpus* **SUMMER WINE™** as part of a mixed border, or perhaps as a bold accent plant. It will provide rich color all season long, and is a great complement to many popular shrub and perennial varieties. Use it in a full sun bed with *Rudbeckia* or gold leaf *Spiraea* for high contrast, or pair it with *Artemisia*, *Buddleia* or other silver leaved plants for a more subtle purple and grey combination. Wherever **SUMMER WINE™** is used in the landscape, it is an intoxicating addition to the sum-



T*iger Eyes™* (*Rhus typhina* 'Bailtiger') offers an amazing spectacle of color. The new growth is a vivid chartreuse green, quickly changing to bright yellow. The leaf stems are fuzzy purplish-pink and form a dramatic contrast with the lemon lime foliage. The branches angle upward while the deeply cut leaflets drape downward giving the whole plant a rather elegant, oriental look. As beautiful as **Tiger Eyes™** is in the summer, its colors are absolutely magnificent in the fall as it turns a luminous combination of yellow, orange and intense scarlet.

Tough and easy to grow, **Tiger Eyes** differs from other sumac in a number of ways. The most obvious being its' small size, reaching a manageable height and width of just 6 feet. Another major difference is that it spreads slowly and should not be considered invasive. They prefer full to part sun, are not particular about soil type and best of all, are quite drought tolerant once established. **Tiger Eyes** Sumac is hardy in zones 4-8. We will have a very limited number of these plants this season.

Isn't it romantic! Intoxicating, dark burgundy-purple leaves shimmer like a fine wine! Hot pink-rose colored flowers add a touch of romance when displayed against the dark glossy foliage! The leaf color of Weigela **Wine & Roses** intensifies to near black in late summer and does not fade to green like Java Red and other older selections. The tubular flowers are adored by Hummingbirds! The leaves provide wonderful color and texture. With a USDA hardiness rating of Zone 4-8 and a size of 4-6 feet tall and 4 feet wide, it is easily maintained at a lower height with a light shearing after bloom. Full sun is essential for maintaining its dark foliage.

Wine & Roses has a wide range of uses. It's an excellent choice for the mixed shrub / perennial border. Use it in combination with blue flowered plants like *Perovskia*, globe thistle or *Caryopteris*, or with yellow flowered plants like *Coreopsis* and Black Eyed Susan. When used in large masses the color impact is very impressive. The branches can be cut and used very effectively in floral arrangements. The colorful foliage adds long lasting color to any design. Try a simple design using Globe Thistle and Wine & Roses, it's simple but elegant. **Wine & Roses** Weigela is adaptable to most soils and locations, so use your imagination and come up with your own favorite combinations. !



Helleborus x hybridus: 2005 Perennial Plant of the Year

The Perennial Plant Association has named *Helleborus xhybridus* 2005 Perennial Plant of the Year. The common name of this marvelous shade plant is Lenten rose. It is an evergreen, late-winter or early-spring flowering member of the buttercup family. Lenten rose is hardy from Zone 9 to Zone 4, and probably colder when plants have snow cover. Mature plants can form clumps that are 18" to 24" tall and 24" to 30" wide. Long lasting blooms are available in many colors and appear as single or double forms. Mature plants often have 50 or more flowers per plant. This evergreen perennial performs best in partial to full shade, but makes an outstanding combination plant for adding color, texture, and habit to the ornamental landscape.



History

Helleborus (hellebore), a member of the family Ranunculaceae, is a small genus containing 15 species of herbaceous perennials native to Europe and Asia. The true wild hellebore species are rarely found in gardens as hellebores hybridize easily providing garden plants with superior flowering and flower colors. Lenten rose was formerly known as *Helleborus orientalis* hybrids. An article in *The New Plantsman* by Will McLewin and Brian Matthew in June 1998 reported that while *Helleborus orientalis* is a distinct species, the epithet (*orientalis* hybrids) frequently given to the cultivated hybrid plants is confusing and incorrect. McLewin and Mathew formally proposed that the garden hybrids be collectively called *Helleborus xhybridus*. The consensus of taxonomists is that present garden hybrids, Lenten roses, are hybrids of nine species.



Ornamental Qualities

A rainbow of colors aptly describes the flowers of the present day hellebore garden hybrids. The flower colors range from pure white to a plum color bordering on black. Others are red, pink, yellow, and several with small to large spots on the inside of the flower. There are semi-doubles to doubles and some with picotee edges. There is a Lenten rose to delight any gardener in late winter, early spring to late spring. Most times the flowers last at least two months and in some climates even longer. Following flowering, the unusual seed pods provide an ornamental effect and can produce wonderful seedlings. The only thing that exceeds the ornamental value of these timeless beauties is the magnificent foliage. The leaves are divided into 7 to 9 segments and look like coarse leathery umbrellas. The foliage texture adds so much to the shade garden and is a perfect backdrop for bulbs and other perennials.



Landscape Use

Lenten roses can be the stars of the early spring garden as specimen plants, massed to function as a foil for other spring beauties and may even be used as an elegant ground cover. *Epimedium* (barrenwort), *Anemone nemorosa* (wood anemone) and *Hepatica* (liverleaf), all spring flowering selections, are excellent companion plantings with Lenten rose. Later in the season the foliage is an impressive garden compliment that provides year round interest. Lenten roses are ideal for naturalizing in woodland areas. They are also excellent for planting on a hillside above a path where the flowers can be viewed from below. *Helleborus xhybridus* is one of the easiest plants to grow and anyone with a shade garden from neophytes to experienced gardeners will be delighted with their experience with Lenten rose.

Cultivation

Lenten roses are easily grown in well-drained, humus-rich and fertile garden soil. In southern regions, Lenten rose grows best in the shade of deciduous trees. In cooler regions they will grow in a sunnier site. The major requirement for optimum growth is good drainage. Planting on a natural or created slope is ideal. Even in the driest of seasons, Lenten roses are tough plants that only require occasional watering after they become established plantings. The foliage remains evergreen in most areas of North America. If the leaves look a little tattered after the winter simply cut them off as the new foliage emerges in the spring. Long term exposure of the bare skin to Lenten rose leaves may cause mild dermatitis. It usually disappears in a few hours. Gardeners with skin sensitivities should wear gloves where prolonged exposure may occur. A good note about this is that alkaloids in the leaves that cause the dermatitis make the leaves undesirable to deer. Consequently, Lenten rose does not become part of the salad buffet for foraging deer.

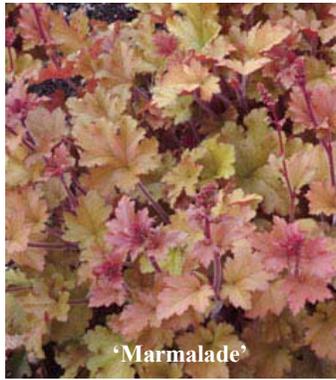
New for 2005 Heuchera Collection



'Lime Rickey'



'Plum Pudding'



'Marmalade'



'Stormy Seas'

Coral Bells ...an Explosion of Color

You may have thought of coral bells as drab little plants with tiny flowers. But the new generation has brought an explosion of stunning new foliage and flower forms. Thousands of seedlings have been drawn from to produce plants that are superior in foliage, flower production, and hardiness. Handsome plants bearing satiny silver leaves measuring eleven inches across, have been chosen. Others include those with breakthrough forms showing ruffled foliage, flowerscapes to three feet tall, superior cut flowers, new rock garden plants... the possibilities are limitless.

There are three breeding programs in the U.S. and one in Canada. Each program concentrates on specific goals. Charles Oliver of the Primrose Path in Pennsylvania is pursuing dwarf forms and some splendid x Heucherellas (The sterile hybrid between Heuchera and Tiarella). In California, the late Dara Emery worked with the not-so-hardy-but-showy Heuchera maxima to produce a series of tall, floriferous hybrids. His torch has been passed on to Bart O'Brien of the Santa Ana Botanical Gardens. Lynn Collicutt of the Agriculture Canada Morden Research Station in Manitoba, Canada has bred 'prairie hardy' forms of Heuchera. These can tolerate temperatures to -40 degrees Fahrenheit. The Terra-Nova line pursues excellence in foliage emphasizing leaf form, size, and showiness.

Pronunciation of this genus has puzzled many. Technically, the name should reflect the German pronunciation of "hoykhera," but, others may argue, "Would Hosta (named after Englishman Thomas Host), be properly pronounced "Hoe-sta?" When plantsman Christopher Lloyd visited a local chapter of the Hardy Plant Society, someone sheepishly asked, "Mr. Lloyd, is Forsythia pronounced 'for-sythe-ia' or 'for-sith-ia'?" With a chuckle and a nudge he explained, "My dear man, whichever way you say it, I know exactly what you are talking about!" With that most of us are comfortable with status quo, which in America is pronounced "Hue-ker-a."

Culturally, Heuchera require good drainage; clays will not do. The addition of compost, gypsum, and a little manure can send your plants flying. Heuchera sanguinea forms are more amenable to sandier soils. Standard potting soil mixes work well for "Heuch's" in containers. Heuchera do require division every three years or so. Branches can be cut off old plants and plunged into the ground with no ill effect. Most Heuchera are hardy between Zones 4 and 9; however, there are the variables of snow-cover and microclimate that can allow these plants to grow in colder zones. Overall, Heuchera has proven resistant to slugs, spider mites, white flies and an assortment of other pests. Cutworms may take an occasional nibble, but if there is a nemesis, it's the Black Vine Weevil in the East. Weevil damage is usually evidenced by notching on the edges of the leaves in late May and June. Weevils are seen only during evening forages. The insidious evil occurs over winter, when the beetle larvae hatch and channel through the succulent stems. In a severe infestation, the entire top of the plant will fall off when you rake your yard. This reveals the cream-colored grubs laughing at you. Fortunately, Heuchera are so tough that I have seen many adventitious roots already sprouting from the decapitated top. This can be replanted in the soil without much further ado.

Coral bells have been used as border edging. They are often seen along sidewalks in military precision, but the true beauty comes en masse. Planted just behind the border's front, these plants offer a colorful airiness that few other flowers provide. The spectrum of bloom color can run from white to pink to coral to cerise-red. Remember the qualities of Heuchera: disease and insect resistance, hardiness, shade tolerance, foliage and flower effects, drought tolerance, ever-green leaves. Few perennials could offer such a package.



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(Continued from page 1)

you know they don't like to eat. It's a good bet that they won't expend the effort into digging for the one desirable plant in the patch. Some gardeners plant the deer's favorites up close to the house, confident they wouldn't *possibly* be so bold as to venture so close, only to be awakened one night by the clacking of hooves on the back deck and stupefied in the morning at the sight of their prized hosta border diminished to a row of ragged, leafless stalks.

The best we can do is to plant what we think the deer are *least likely* to eat and be prepared to replant those we were mistaken about. Remember, what the deer choose to eat is influenced by environmental conditions and the availability of alternative foods, so what's on the menu this year may *not* be on the menu next year.

The perennials listed here are *generally* considered to be **deer resistant**. Though your personal experience may prove otherwise, they are a pretty safe bet. **Remember, there's no such thing as a deer proof plant!**

- Achillea--Yarrow
- Aconitum--Monkshood
- Agastache--Anise Hyssop
- Ajuga--Bugleweed
- Alchemilla--Lady's Mantle
- Allium--Ornamental Onion, Chives
- Amsonia--Blue Star
- Anemone
- Artemesia--Silver Mound
- Aruncus--Goat's Beard
- Asarum--Wild Ginger
- Asclepias--Butterfly Weed
- Astilbe--False Spirea
- Aurinia--Basket-of-Gold, Perennial Alyssum
- Baptisia *australis*--Blue False Indigo
- Bergenia--Heartleaf Bergenia, Pig Squeak
- Brunnera--Heartleaf Brunnera
- Buddleia--Butterfly Bush
- Calamintha--Calamint
- Campanula--Bellflower
- Caryopteris--Blue Mist Shrub
- Centaurea--Perennial Bachelor's Button, Cornflower
- Ceratostigma *plumbaginoides*--Plumbago, Leadwort
- Chasmanthium *latifolium*--Northern Sea Oats
- Cimicifuga *ramosa*--Black Snakeroot
- Clematis
- Convallaria *majalis*--Lily of the Valley
- Coreopsis--Tickseed, Threadleaf Coreopsis
- Delphinium
- Dianthus--Pinks
- Dicentra--Bleeding Heart
- Dictamnus--Gas Plant
- Digitalis--Foxglove
- Echinacea--Coneflower



Echinacea 'Sunrise'

- Echinops--Globe Thistle
- Epimedium--Barrenwort
- Erigeron--Fleabane
- Eupatorium--Snakeroot, Joe-Pye Weed
- Euphorbia--Cushion Spurge
- Ferns (most)
- Gaillardia--Blanket Flower
- Galium *odoratum*--Sweet Woodruff
- Gaura--Wand Flower
- Geranium--Hardy Geranium, Cranesbill
- Geum--Avens
- Gypsophila--Baby's Breath
- Helleborus--Lenten Rose
- Heuchera--Coral Bells

- Hibiscus--Rose Mallow
- Iris
- Kirengeshoma *palmata*--Yellow Waxbells
- Knautia
- Lamiastrum--Yellow Archangel
- Lamium
- Lavendula--Lavender
- Liatris--Gayfeather, Blazing Star
- Linum--Flax
- Lobelia *cardinalis*--Cardinal Flower
- Monarda--Bee Balm
- Myosotis--Forget-Me-Not
- Nepeta--Catmint
- Oenothera--Evening Primrose

- Origanum--Oregano
- Ornamental Grasses (most if not all)
- Pachysandra--Japanese Spurge
- Paeonia--Peony
- Papaver--Poppy
- Perovskia--Russian Sage
- Physostegia--Obedient Plant
- Platycodon--Balloon Flower
- Polemonium--Jacob's Ladder
- Potentilla--Cinquefoil
- Pulmonaria--Lungwort
- Salvia *nemorosa*--Perennial Salvia
- Saponaria--Rock Soapwort
- Sempervivum--Hen & Chicks
- Stachys--Lamb's Ear, Betony
- Stokesia--Stokes' Aster
- Tanacetum--Tansy, Painted Daisy
- Thalictrum--Meadow Rue
- Thymus--Creeping Thyme
- Tiarella--Foamflower
- Verbascum--Mullein
- Veronica--Speedwell
- Vinca--Periwinkle, Myrtle
- Yucca--Adam's Needle



Polemonium 'Snow and Sapphire'



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4 Coral Bells (on page 5)

Heuchera

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