The Growing Place
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Cardinal Dogwood

Cornus sericea 'Cardinal'

Cardinal Dogwood bark
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 8 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 2b

Other Names: C.stolonifera, Red-Osier

Description:

An excellent general purpose shrub, very hardy; good fall color, and bright red stems show up well against the winter snow; to maintain stem color and plant vigor, prune stems that are no longer red to the ground in late winter.

Ornamental Features

Cardinal Dogwood has clusters of creamy white flowers at the ends of the branches in late spring. It has green deciduous foliage. The pointy leaves turn an outstanding brick red in the fall. It produces white berries in late summer. The cherry red branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Cardinal Dogwood in winter
Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota

Landscape Attributes

Cardinal Dogwood is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and can be pruned at anytime. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

Cardinal Dogwood is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Cardinal Dogwood will grow to be about 8 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is quite adaptable, prefering to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selection of a native North American species.

Growing Place Choice Plants

Our Growing Place Choice plants are chosen because they are strong performers year after year, staying attractive with less maintenance when planted in the right place.