

# Red Osier Dogwood



This wildlife plant is a larval host for butterflies and supports bees and birds, so it makes an excellent addition to a pollinator garden. It works well as a specimen, massed in a shrub border, or used in front of an evergreen hedge for contrast. Tolerating wet areas allows

it to be planted in low spots in the landscape. Use multiple plants to form a hedge or thicket and provide screening or security. This plant is seldom browsed by deer. Native Americans are known to have used this plant for basketweaving and in tool making. It was also used as food.

## ***Cornus sericea***

- **Use:** Red twig dogwood is a large, multi-stemmed, deciduous shrub in the Cornaceae (dogwood) family and native to most of North America, including Georgia. Growing to a height and width of 6 to 9 feet, it is typically found growing in damp boggy areas, riparian areas, or wetland margins. The common name indicates the bright red color of the stems. Native Northern States in the US.
- **Exposure/Soil:** Although it tolerates a range of soil conditions, including wet and dry sites and heavy clay soil, it prefers organically rich, consistently moist soil. Plant it in full sun to partial shade, though plants can become stressed in full sun during our hot southern summers.
- **Growth:** Moderate grower to 5-9 ft. tall, 5-10 ft. wide. It grows vigorously and spreads by underground stems to form a colony that can become weedy in some areas, though its spreading roots can help mitigate erosion. If its spread is undesirable, root prune it with a spade.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 2a-7b; Large shrub
- **Foliage:** Deciduous; Dark green ovate leaves; go from orange to red to purple in the fall. Its showy red stems provide great winter interest. The brightest color occurs on new stem growth, so prune the plant back in early spring to stimulate more growth.
- **Flower:** White flowers appear in the early summer, followed by white berries that last into the fall and are a food source for songbirds. The leaves turn attractive shades of orange or red, fading to purple in the fall. When they drop, the showy bright red stems make this plant have true year-round interest.