



MORTON ARBORETUM

JOY MORTON · FOUNDER

BULLETIN OF POPULAR INFORMATION

LISLE, ILLINOIS

SOME UNCOMMON PLANTS

Coriaria japonica (Gray)—Though a rarity outside of botanical collections, the foliage and fruit of *Coriaria japonica*, an Asiatic member of a small botanical family (*Coriariaceae*) of doubtful affinity, are in our opinion sufficiently conspicuous to warrant the recognition of the gardening fraternity. As no common name has as yet been improvised, “*Coriaria*” will have to suffice, and to make it easier to remember its Latin meaning is cited. “*Coriarius*” pertains to leather, and in this case refers to the use sometimes made of the plant for tanning. Semi-herbaceous in character, the four-angled pithy stems are renewed annually from the base, forming a low, horizontally spreading bush not over two feet high. The new stems, conspicuously colored salmon rose, display the long pointed, opposite bright green leaves in a striking fashion, while the latter provide a pleasing foil for the one and one-half to two and one-half-inch racemes of highly decorative fruit. Deep salmon rose in its immature stage, the fruit changes to violet black as it reaches maturity in August and September. There is nothing ornamental about the greenish flowers appearing in late May, but they are of interest structurally because of the peculiar manner in which the petals enlarge, become fleshy and finally enclose the fruit. Both leaves and fruit are said to be poisonous. Being slightly tender as regards hardness, a well drained soil and protection are essential to its successful culture.

Lonicera deflexicalyx (Batal.)—By far the most conspicuous plant along the Ground Cover Path at the present time is *Lonicera deflexicalyx*, a “strikingly elegant,” free growing Honeysuckle whose gracefully arching branches are thickly studded with clusters of pointed, teat-like orange red fruit. The manner in which they are borne, in pairs in the leaf axils on the upper sides of the branches, gives them

an especial prominence which never fails to command attention. Good foliage of a pleasing tone of medium green adds immeasurably to the effectiveness of the ripened fruit, just as it does in June when the yellow flowers are the center of attraction.

Why such a worthy shrub should have gone unrecognized for so long is difficult to understand, as records reveal that its introduction from China and Thibet occurred way back in 1904. It is perfectly hardy, extremely floriferous and of distinct appearance, and will seldom exceed a height of eight feet.

Pachysandra procumbens (Michx.)—Those who hold that much used ground cover, *Pachysandra terminalis*, in disfavor because of the yellowish cast of its semi-evergreen leaves, will find in its American cousin, the ALLEGHENY or MOUNTAIN SPURGE, a plant superior in many respects. In spite of the fact that it is not evergreen, the foliage has a more pleasing deep green color and is decidedly softer in tone. The fragrant white to purplish flowers are not unattractive, either, appearing as they do in early spring in crowded spikes from the base of the stems. Bees seem to find them as plentiful a source of nectar as other members of the Boxwood family.

Semi-herbaceous in aspect, this Spurge forms low compact masses with stems six to twelve inches high, springing unbranched from a rootstock, and bearing at their summits clusters of leaves arranged in whorls.

Although growing naturally in rocky woods from West Virginia to Florida and preferring moist shade, this plant is doing well at the Arboretum under Siberian Elms where the soil is dry and the competition with tree roots keen. The Southern distribution suggests the possibility of tenderness in the North, and in purchasing plants it might be well to acquire stock from the northern limits of the range.

Securinega suffruticosa (Pall.)—Having as its chief claim to distinction its graceful habit of growth and ability to thrive in part shade, *Securinega suffruticosa*, an uncommon shrubby northeastern Asiatic SPURGE (*Euphorbiaceae* Family) has remained in comparative obscurity since its introduction from Siberia in 1783. Lacking showy flowers and bright colored fruit, its more subtle good qualities have eluded those unable to see beauty in its fountain-like mass, and in the bright green

leaves and stems which retain their freshness the summer through. Green characterizes the flowers, too, and after their appearance in July and August, subglobose fruits the size of a pepper corn, and also green, follow. They are pendent on slender stems to one-half inch long.

The bush will grow to a height of six or eight feet, and forms a cascade of foliage extending all the way to the ground line. In connection with the generic name, it is interesting to learn that "*Securis*" is a derivation of the Latin word for hatchet, and "*negare*" from the word meaning to refuse, referring to the hard wood of some species.

WRIGHT OR ORIENTAL VIBURNUM, *Viburnum Wrightii* (Miq.)—The red fruited Viburnums are always showy and none more so than the Oriental species, *Wrightii*, a medium sized upright shrub rather like the Linden Viburnum but broader of leaf and with larger, more glossy bright scarlet fruits. The latter are round-ovoid in shape, about one-quarter of an inch in length and are profusely borne in handsome, full clusters set off by rich green, prominently veined leaves. Interest at other seasons is supplied by typical white Viburnum flowers in five branched, short stalked cymes in May and June, and by the deep crimson foliage coloring of autumn.

REGEL'S THREEWINGNUT, *Tripterygium Regelii* (Sprague and Tak.)—Seen without flowers or fruit, this handsome rambling or climbing shrub which Mr. J. G. Jack of the Arnold Arboretum introduced from Korea in 1905 might easily be mistaken for a Bittersweet, plainly showing as it does certain characteristics of the Celastraceae family to which it happens to belong. The long terminal panicles of small yellowish white flowers making their appearance in such profusion in mid summer exhibit little resemblance to the Bittersweet, however, and equally unorthodox are the curious three-winged, bladder-like fruits, which look more like WYCH ELM seeds furnished with an extra wing. Distinctly spotted, angular brown stems support the bright green foliage whose size imparts to it a bold aspect. As its twining stems cling readily to supports, this vine may be easily trained to walls or fences. We have found it hardy here but slow of growth. We had the misfortune of losing our representative specimen in the Vine collection during transplanting operations several years ago, but will replace it in the spring.

E. L. KAMMERER.



REGEL'S THREEWINGNUT, *Tripterygium Regelii*, growing luxuriantly at Bar Harbor, Maine.

Photograph through the courtesy of Mrs. Beatrix Farrand, Reef Point, Bar Harbor.

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