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### Time-Saving Mighty-Mite Shrubs that Outshine Perennials!

**N = Native or nativar to North America**

**Shrubs can save maintenance time and money!** \*Broadly speaking, one shrub can fill the space that requires multiple perennials. This not only saves maintenance time, but typically saves money as well \*In general, shrubs require: -less water than perennials -less fertilizer -do not need the same nutrient-rich soil as many perennials, annuals, edibles -do not require the same maintenance: deadheading, dividing, staking, preparing for overwintering

#### General Rules of Thumb for Pruning Flowering Shrubs

**\*Prune spring flowering shrubs right after they bloom but before July 4th.** Forsythia SHOW OFF 'Sugar Baby' Sun – Part Shade 1.5'-2.5' Spring Z 5-8 Deer resistant Prune 1

**\*Prune summer and fall flowering shrubs in late fall, winter or early spring while they are still dormant or just breaking dormancy.** Clethra Summersweet 'Hummingbird' Sun-Part Shade 2'-4' July-August Z4-9 Fragrant! Native Deer resistant Buttery-yellow fall foliage

**\*Don't assume all flowering shrubs need pruning every year.** Most common reasons for pruning:  
-Control size. Ideally you should be purchasing shrubs that mature to the size you want -Remove broken, diseased or crossing branches -For variegated plants, remove non-variegated leaf branches -For suckering shrubs (i.e., Forsythia), remove some, or all suckers, by cutting the sucker off just beneath the soil surface

#### Planting tips for flowering shrubs:

-Water the container, B&B, or bare-root well the day before -Dig a hole the same depth as the 'container' and twice as wide -Place shrub in hole so the crown is at, or slightly above (especially if clay soil), the soil line -If there is burlap and/or wire on the root ball, remove as much as you can before & after it is in the hole -If the plant is rootbound, loosen/break-up the roots before planting -Cast Espoma Bio-tone Starter Fertilizer into the hole with the root ball. Follow application directions -Pour water into the hole over the roots -Backfill with soil and water in well -Water every few days the first 2-3 weeks as roots settle in (B&B should be watered using a hose placed at the base of the plant and allowed to trickle down to the roots). Then once or twice a week for the rest of the season.

#### General care of shrubs:

-For most flowering shrubs, apply a balanced granular fertilizer (e.g. 10-10-10), or Plant-tone or Rose-tone in spring  
-For acid-loving shrubs (Rhododendron, Azalea, Mt. Laurel, Pieris, Dogwood) use Espoma Holly-tone in spring  
-Water as needed. Don't forget to give them a good drink in fall before the ground freezes. **Especially key for spring blooming shrubs** -For 'borderline' flowering shrubs in windy areas, especially spring bloomers, create a windbreak (i.e., burlap screen). Some shrubs can be sprayed with an anti-desiccant (i.e. Wilt-Pruf) -Prune as needed

**\*Pruning to rejuvenate older shrubs** Many overgrown shrubs can be severely pruned in late winter or early spring

**\*Pruning to thin stems within a shrub.** Remove up to 1/3 of stems from interior, cutting stems to the ground. Allows more sunlight and airflow to the shrub's interior.

### **Growing shrubs in containers**

Tips for growing shrubs in containers. \*Select containers that are large enough to accommodate roots and allow growth. \*Make sure the pot's top diameter is WIDER than the rest of the pot (important for removing plant to refresh soil or move to larger pot) \*If you are planning to move the container to an unheated inside space, choose pots that are lightweight (e.g. fiberglass, polypropylene, plastic). OR use a plant caddy with wheels, or containers with built in caster wheels.

\*If the container **will be left outside in the winter** choose plants that are ideally hardy to **at least one zone colder** than where you live

\*Fill the container with a premier organic potting soil– Espoma Potting Mix

\*You will need to refresh the soil in the container every three or so years. Root pruning can also be done at this time to help maintain size.

\*Fertilize shrubs in containers in spring with Osmocote 14-14-14 which slowly releases fertilizer over 4 months

\*In mid to late November (Zone 5) move pots into an unheated garage, shed or barn. Note: if moving evergreens into unheated area, there needs to be some sunlight, can't be totally dark.

\*If you will be leaving the container outside in winter:

1) If unprotected (e.g. not on a porch) cover the plant with a tarp and secure to pot. Tarps Now sells White opaque polyurethane tarp- 6 Mil Reinforced 6' x 8' \$7.95 Up to 50' x 100'

2) If the shrub is marginally hardy for your area, consider wrapping the pot with bubble wrap. Also place the pot outside the path of winter winds (e.g. site it on the east side of the house).

**\*For each of the featured flowering shrubs I will note pruning recommendations as follows:**

Prune 1: Prune in late winter or early spring

Prune 2: Prune after spring bloom

NOTE: Some shrubs seldom need pruning. Best to buy shrubs that mature to the height and width you want!

### **Time-Saving, Mighty-Mite Shrubs**

\***Syringa 'Baby Kim' Lilac** Sun 2'-3' Spring Z3-8 Deer resistant Prune 2

\***Fothergilla x intermedia 'Blue Mist'** Bottlebrush Sun – Part Shade 2'-3' Spring Z5-8 Prune 2

\***Rhododendron 'Towhead'** (left, 2'-3', Z5-8) and **'Ken Janeck'**; (3', Z6-9) Part Sun – Shade Prune 2

\***Azalea 'Northern Hi-Lights'** Sun – Part Sun 4'-5' Spring Stunning burgundy-bronze foliage Prune 2  
n Northern Lights series released from Univ. of Minnesota

\***Pieris japonica 'Cavatine'** Dwarf Japanese Andromeda Part Sun-Part Shade 2'-3' Spring Z5-8 Deer resistant Prune 2 Idea: If grown in container, use a pollinator friendly spiller annual such as Lantana 'Luscious Grape'

\***Deutzia** Sun-Part Shade 2'- 8' height range Spring Z5-8 Fragrant flowers Deer resistant Prune 2

Clockwise from top left: 'Chardonnay Pearls', 'Crème Fraiche' 'Nikko', 'Yuki Cherry Blossom'

\***Weigela florida 'Midnight'** Sun (12"-18" Sun) Spring Deer resistant Prune 2

\***Itea virginica 'Fizzy Mizzy'** Sweetspire Sun – Shade 2'-3' Early summer Z5-9 Native Fragrant Unique upright flowers Burgundy-red fall foliage Prune 2

\***Sorbaria 'Matcha Ball'** Ash Leaf Spirea Sun–Part Shade 2'-3' Summer (few if any blooms) Z3-7 Prune 1 (my garden)

\***Hydrangea arborescens 'Seaside Serenade 'Bar Harbor** (left, 3'-4') and **Invincibelle 'Wee White'** (1'-2')

Smooth Hydrangea Sun – Part Shade Summer Z3-8 Native Prune 1

\***Hydrangea paniculata Panicle Hydrangea 'Fire Light Tidbit'** (left, 3') and **'Little Hottie'** (3'-5') Sun –Part Sun Z3-8 Drought tolerant Prune 1

\***Hydrangea macrophylla 'Wedding Gown'** (left, 2'-3') and **'Wee Bit Giddy'** (2') Part Sun – Part Shade Summer-Fall Good Rebloomers Z5-9 Both bloom on old and new wood

- \***Hydrangea quercifolia** Oakleaf Hydrangea ‘Munchkin’ (left, U.S. National Arboretum introduction) and ‘Ruby Slippers’ Sun – Part Shade 3’-4’ Z5-9 Native Prune 2
- \***Hydrangea serrata** Mountain Hydrangea ‘Tuff Stuff Ah-Ha’ Sun – Part Sun (blooms less in part shade) 2’-3’ Summer Z 5-9 Blooms on old and new wood. IF pruning needed Prune 2
- \***Hydrangea ‘Let’s Dance Can Do’** Cross between *serrata* and *macrophylla* Sun – Part Sun 3’- 4’ Z4-9 Slightly mounded, lace-cap style flower with more sterile florets Blooms on new and old wood. Sets flower buds along the entire length of the stem, versus only at tip
- \***Hydrangea x ‘Fairytrail Bride’** Cascading Hydrangea Sun – Part Sun 4’ Late Spring-Summer Zones 6-9 Blooms on old wood Plant of the Year winner at the 2018 Chelsea Flower Show
- \***Lespedeza bicolor (also sold as thunbergii) ‘Little Buddy’** Sun – Part Shade 2’-3’ Aug-Sept Z 4-8 Deer resistant Shorter than ‘Gilbraltar’ (up to 6’) May die back to the ground in colder zones Prune 1
- \***Caryopteris ‘Beyond Midnight’** Sun 24”-30” Summer-Fall Z5-9 Deer resistant Prune 1
- \***Ilex verticillata** Winterberry ‘Berry Poppins’ Sun – Part Sun 3’ – 4’ Summer Zones 3 – 8 Native Deer resistant (use Mr. Poppins as the pollinator. ‘Jim Dandy’ may also work) Prune 1

**THANK YOU!**

\*Kerry’s Four Gardening Books. \$20 per book includes shipping. [www.pyours.com](http://www.pyours.com)

Please check out over a dozen HOW-TO GARDENING VIDEOS as well as BUNDLE SPECIALS  
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