



Viburnum

Viburnum sp.

Honeysuckle Family (Caprifoliaceae)

Zones: 4-8

Full Sun to Partial Shade

Moderate Water

Location: Many cultivars throughout the Garden

Viburnums provide beauty and interest to the landscape in all seasons of the year. The flowers, foliage, fruit, and autumn color offer ornamental value for every garden. Woody ornamental expert, Michael Dirr, sums up his enthusiasm for the plant, "A garden without a viburnum is akin to life without music and art."

In the spring, viburnums adorn the garden with their enchanting flower clusters, which occur in three formations: flat-topped, pyramidal (semi-snowball type), and rounded (snowball type). The flowers range in color from white to pink and in some species (e.g. *V. carlesii*) provide a spicy heart warming fragrance. The joys of viburnum flowers can be brought inside the home as cut flowers in vases or arrangements.

Throughout the summer, viburnums are valued for their handsome, glossy, green foliage. They may be deciduous or evergreen. Most are dense shrubs with a few exceptions (like *V. prunifolium* and *V. lentago*), which can be considered small trees. In the landscape, shrubs can be used for hedges, screens, massing, or a shrub border.

In autumn, viburnums offer a variety of fall color. Leaves of *V. prunifolium* turn a fiery scarlet. While cultivars of *V. dilatatum* offer a variety of reds, yellows and oranges. *V. lentago* and *V. dentatum* turn a glossy red when conditions are right. For best fall color make sure to plant in full sun.

Viburnums are also known for their brightly colored ornamental fruit which show starting late summer and lasting sometimes well into the winter. The fruit, a drupe about 3/8 to 3/4 inches in diameter, is borne in showy clusters. Fruit color may be red, pink, yellow, blue, or black in color. Fruit of *V. cassinoides* change from green to pink then from red to blue before maturing to black and often all colors are present in the same cluster. Fruit from *V. trilobum*, is used to make preserves and jellies. For best fruiting results, plant several bushes together.

Red Butte Garden has a fine collection of Viburnums including all the species mentioned above. Much of the collection is fittingly showcased in the Four Seasons Garden.