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Colorful Foliage for Fall and Winter

By Lydia Holley, Master Gardener



One of the easiest ways to add color to your garden is through the use of colored foliage, especially in fall and winter when blooms are scarce. Try adding the following colorful plants to your garden. You will be happy when you look outside on a cold winter's day and see something beautiful and colorful in your garden.

Fringe flower (*Loropetalum*) is a lovely shrub which can grow to the size of a small tree. If you wish, dwarf cultivars are available. Fringe flower usually sports dark purple foliage and bright pink blooms in early spring. It is eye-catching as a hedge, but you can also use it as a specimen plant.

Spotted laurel (*Aucuba*) sports variegated leaves with yellow spots. It is also known as gold dust plant. It is a nice addition to a shady area.

Heavenly bamboo (*Nandina*) is a plant that has been popular for years. My great-grandmother grew heavenly bamboo in her garden, and it still grows there. There are now dwarf cultivars available that are sterile, and they are more colorful than the species. A versatile plant, heavenly bamboo can grow in sun or shady conditions.

Abelia is another old-fashioned plant that has become more popular due to cultivars that come in various colors of variegated foliage. Some are yellow, while others tend to be pink or red. Abelia will grow in sun or shade, and there are numerous cultivars so you can choose the one that is best for your particular needs.

Variegated Euonymus comes in white, silver, or gold variegated colors. I have some planted to hide an air conditioning unit. It brings a touch of color to my garden all year, and provides a colorful backdrop to blooming flowers in the spring.

If you are looking for a drought-tolerant plant that is eye-catching, look no further than 'Color Guard' Yucca. This showy specimen plant will withstand heat and cold and can be planted in full sun or part shade.

Aztec grass and other variegated liriopes can outline your garden in color all year, or draw attention to a small space. They will light up dark corners and many can take full sun.

Just because the days grow shorter does not mean you have to give up on color. Add some plants with colorful foliage to your garden and you may feel like it's Spring all year.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email hendersonCMGA@gmail.com, or visit txmq.org/hendersonmq.