

FLOWERING QUINCE

Chaenomeles speciosa



Characteristics

- Type: Shrub
- Zone: 4 to 8
- Height: 6.00 to 10.00 feet
- Spread: 6.00 to 10.00 feet
- Bloom Time: March to April
- Bloom Description: Scarlet to red
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Water: Medium
- Maintenance: Low
- Suggested Use: Hedge
- Flower: Showy
- Fruit: Showy, Edible
- Other: Thorns
- Tolerate: Drought, Clay Soil

Culture

Easily grown in average, medium moisture, well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. Best flowering occurs in full sun. Adapts to a wide range of soil conditions, but prefers well-drained loams. Established plants will tolerate dryish soils. Plants bloom on old growth. Avoid heavy pruning. Prune to shape as needed in spring after flowering to stimulate growth of flowering spurs which will improve bloom for the following year (although such pruning will reduce fruit production for the current year). Promptly remove root suckers to control possible spread.

Noteworthy Characteristics

Chaenomeles speciosa, commonly called flowering quince, is a dense, broad-rounded, deciduous shrub with often-tangled, spiny, gray-brown twigs. It typically grows to 6-10' tall and as wide. It is native to China, Tibet and Myanmar. Scarlet to red (less frequently pink or white) five-petaled flowers (to 2" diameter) bloom before the leaves fully unfold in an often showy early spring bloom. Flowers are followed by hard, dot-speckled, edible, yellowish-green fruits (2.5" quinces) that are rather bitter when eaten fresh from the shrub, but quite tasty in preserves and jellies. Finely-toothed, oval to oblong, glossy dark green leaves (to 3.5" long). Genus name comes from the Greek words *chaino* meaning to gape and *melon* meaning an apple in the incorrect belief that the fruits split open. Specific epithet means showy.

Problems

Susceptible to fungal leaf spot (particularly in years with heavy spring rainfall) which can cause considerable leaf defoliation. Fireblight and scab can be problems in some areas. Aphids can cause significant damage to new growth. Lesser pests include scale and mites. Chlorosis (yellowing of foliage) will occur in high pH soils. Flower buds are susceptible to significant damage from early spring frosts.

Garden Uses

Hedge, screen, barrier. Specimen or group in shrub border or cottage garden. Branches may be clipped and forced for winter bloom.

Courtesy of Missouri Botanical Society Plant Finder