

# What's Blooming?

*September 2009*

*As you exit, please recycle this guide at our front door for the next visitor.*

## ***Gardenia 'Kleims Hardy'***

Fragrance is one of the most sensuous ways to experience a garden. The Chinese aesthetic often places more weight on a plant's fragrance rather than the color or size of its flower. Enjoy the alluring scent of gardenia at a number of locations throughout the garden, beginning in our Courtyard of Tranquility where you'll find three small, unassuming looking evergreen shrubs with creamy white star-shaped flowers. These winter hardy plants produce exquisitely fragrant flowers in summer with sporadic flowering into autumn. **(Map A)**

## ***Begonia grandis ssp. evansiana (hardy begonia)***

Pendulant flowers are a soft, rose-pink, translucent and somewhat frosted. They tumble gracefully downward against lovely triangular leaves with prominent red veins underneath. Foliage is especially showy when backlit by late afternoon sun. *B. grandis* emerges later than most perennials in the spring. Among several specimens, find one growing in the in the Courtyard of Tranquility located south of the Hall of Brocade Clouds. **(Map B)**

## ***Osmanthus heterophyllus 'Variegatus' (variegated holly leaf osmanthus)***

This venerable tree presides over the Courtyard of Tranquility, located just inside the garden's entrance. Affectionately referred to as 'Old Gui,' it attests to the community spirit that helped our garden grow. This specimen was generously donated by a southeast Portland neighborhood where it was planted over one hundred years ago and is a rarity given its age and size. Potentially in bloom by late September, Old Gui brings forth a crescendo of creamy white flowers so heavy with fragrance that passersby are compelled to linger in the streets beyond the garden wall. **(Map C)**

## ***Magnolia delavayi (mountain magnolia)***

China is home to the greatest number of magnolia species and in ancient times, only the emperor was allowed to grow this highly respectable plant. This evergreen magnolia is seldom seen in the U.S. with only a few specimens on public display along the west coast. The species name honors Jean Delavay, a French missionary and prolific plant collector who botanized extensively in the hinterlands of China's Yunnan province two hundred years ago. An early summer bloomer, you may be lucky enough to catch one of the few, late season blooms. **(Map D)**

## ***Pinellia tripartita (voodoo lily, green dragon)***

While species of this genus are native to China, *P. tripartita* is an herbaceous perennial native to southern Japan. This diminutive Arum relative has attractive arrow- or heart-shaped leaves. Its oddly charming flower has a green, hooded spathe and extended, whiplike spadix. You'll find our specimen situated between two fragrant gardenias in the Courtyard of Tranquility. **(Map E)**

## ***Musa basjoo (hardy fiber banana)***

Several stands of this atypically hardy banana are planted throughout the garden. It is used primarily for ornamental effect—its fruits are inedible—and will grow to a height of fifteen feet with arching leaf blades that may reach ten feet. Pale yellow flowers in summer are followed by small, green fruits of about 3" in length. Medieval Chinese poets praised the banana for the beauty of its long, undulating leaves and pendulous flowers. The banana is also an emblem of self-education. Lacking

paper, impoverished students would practice calligraphy on its leaves instead. To spot flower and fruit look up into the banana's tree-like canopy of exotic foliage for a huge, drooping, dusty-gold flower pod. As with several other species of banana, the stems of *Musa basjoo* also provide fibers used in the manufacture of textiles. All parts of the plant have been harvested for use in traditional Chinese medicine. **(Map F)**

***Rosa chinensis* 'Mutabilis' (Chinese twelve month rose)**

Named for its tendency to bloom year around in temperate climates. This single flowering, bi-color rose bears loose, cup-shaped flowers which change from light yellow to peach and then to pink. *R. chinensis* 'Mutabilis' was used in the development of hybrid tea roses in England during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Find specimens next to the in the Knowing the Fish Pavilion and in the southeast corner of the outer entry plaza. **(Map G)**

***Koelreuteria paniculata* (Golden rain tree)**

Native to China, this tree has rather spectacular, 8- to 14- inch long panicles of yellow flowers in late summer followed by papery, 3-lobed, inflated fruit capsules resembling tiny lanterns. These fruit capsules are first rosy-red, turning buff and brown and lasting through the autumn. **(Map H)**

***Mahonia fortunei* (Fortune's mahonia)**

This Chinese relative of our native Oregon grape is just beginning to flower. Its bright yellow flowers are borne at the terminals of its branches and are contrasted by the soft matte green of its foliage. Reaching 7 feet tall, if allowed to, its new growth is an attractive burgundy color. **(Map I)**

***Firmiana simplex* (Chinese parasol tree)**

Towering over the east half of the garden, this quintessential Chinese tree can be found in nearly every Chinese scholar's garden. It is said to be the only tree that the mythical phoenix will land upon, and then only when a just ruler has brought peace to the land. It has huge lime green leaves and smooth gray-green bark that contribute to its sublime beauty. **(Map J)**

***Dichroa febrifuga* (evergreen hydrangea)**

This hydrangea-relative is evergreen and in late spring, produces a mophead of petite flower buds that open to tiny, star-shaped blooms in the most incandescent of blues. Flowering continues through the summer, and come fall, branches are weighted with pendulant clusters of tiny pink fruits that gradually segue into metallic blue "bb"s. A related species, *Dichroa versicolor*, has a slightly wider leaf. **(*Dichroa febrifuga* -Map K1) (*Dichroa versicolor* - Map K2 )**

***Anemone* 'Prinz Heinrich'**

A. 'Prinz Heinrich' is a vigorous, semi-evergreen herbaceous perennial which spreads by creeping rhizomes. Semi-double, rose-pink flowers with golden yellow stamens rise up on wiry green stems from August through October. These dainty flowers with their trifoliate, slightly hairy leaves are a wonderful accompaniment at the base of large trees. Look towards the back of the Phoenix Rest for these charming plants. **(Map L)**

***Tricyrtis* 'Togen' (toad lily)**

This is one of our favorites given its mid- to late summer bloom time. Flowers are lavender with yellow throats and dark purple spots. Visitors often compare them to orchids. Foliage is similar to false Solomon's seal with oblong, deeply veined leaves. While toad lily can be found at many locations in the garden, this patch allows you to get up close and observe its diminutive, yet spectacular flowers. **(Map M)**

***Magnolia* 'Yellow Bird'**

China is the country with the greatest number of native magnolia species. While the Garden has several species of magnolia, most have already completed their flowering cycle for the year. *Magnolia* 'Yellow Bird' is at the east end of the covered bridge in the southeast section of the garden. A few of its buttery yellow, cup-shaped blooms may still remain until the very last days of summer. **(Map N)**

***Kerria japonica* 'Pleniflora' (ditang flower)**

Native to China, this reliable spring and fall bloomer has brilliant golden yellow flowers running the length of arching, bright green, cane-like branches. The double blooms of *K. j.* 'Pleniflora' are dense and round. The Chinese have cultivated this popular garden plant longer than anyone can remember. **(Map O)**

***Gardenia* 'Chuck Hayes'**

Originating as a seedling selected by Charles Hayes of Cavalier Nursery in Virginia, this cultivar possesses as much fragrance as less hardy types and is reportedly more cold tolerant than other gardenias. Look for this evergreen shrub's large, creamy white semi-double flowers along the west wall of the Courtyard of Permeating Fragrance. **(Map P)**

***Hibiscus syriacus* (rose of sharon)**

The flowers of this deciduous member of the mallow family are alluring and plentiful. Our cultivars 'Minerva' and 'Aphrodite' grow at the east end of the *Zig Zag Bridge* in front of a windmill palm. Trumpet-shaped blooms consist of slightly wrinkled lavender or pink petals with a deep red 'eye' in the center and last for little more than one day. Three-lobed leaves are coarsely toothed and occasionally used for tea in China. This Asian native came to the West via the Middle East, hence the reference to Syria in its name. **(Map Q)**

***Liriope* sp. (lily turf)**

Chinese gardeners sometimes call this lily family member the 'bordering everything grass' because they use it extensively to border pathways and also in masses beneath larger trees. A very durable evergreen, it is also artfully displayed in pots either alone or as an accent to a focal plant. In late summer and early fall, lily turf produces numerous spikes of lavender flowers, creating subtle waves of color. Several cultivars of this Chinese garden standard, some with variegated leaves, are located in many places inside and outside the Garden. **(Map R)**

***Rosa* 'Sevillana'**

Developed by the illustrious House of Meilland Roses in Le Luc En Provence, France, *Rosa* 'Sevillana' is one of the most maintenance free roses we've encountered. Although it aspires to be a large shrub, we keep it well-pruned given the space limitations of the garden. Regardless, it blooms profusely throughout the summer and fall adding a festive splash of red to the Garden. The Chinese landscape professionals who designed the Portland Classical Chinese Garden chose *Rosa* 'Sevillana' as a nod to Portland's own namesake—"The City of Roses." **(Map S)**

***Lespedeza thunbergii* (bush clover)**

Arching slender branches clothed in blue-green leaves with silver accents are the perfect foil for soft purple, pea-like flowers. This vigorous shrub creates a fountain effect as it cascades into the water from a small island located at the west end of the *Zig Zag Bridge*. **(Map T)**

***Magnolia champaca* (white orchid michelia)**

This movable feast for the nose is contained in a decorative ceramic pot in front of the Tower of Cosmic Reflections. This broadleaf evergreen has been widely planted in the tropical and subtropical regions of southern China for millennia. Flowers are white, somewhat inconspicuous, but deeply fragrant. Prepare to be spirited away as so many of our southeast asian visitors have been upon meeting this old friend in such a faraway place. **(Map U)**

**Indigofera (Himalayan indigo)**

This deciduous shrub is native to the northwest Himalayas and produces a continuous flurry of pinkish-purple flowers from June through September. The blue-green leaves are composed of 13-21 tiny leaflets giving it that delicate, “sweet pea” appearance. (*I. heterantha*-Map V1, *I. kirilowii*—Map V2)

***Kirengeshoma palmata* (yellow waxbells)**

This hardy, woodland perennial is grown as much for its maple-like leaves as for its flowers which are produced in late summer when other woody favorites begin to dull. Yellow flowers are borne in sprays on wiry stems that bend under their own weight. Blooms resemble a single-flowered Japanese anemone not fully opened. (Map W)

***Hedychium coccineum* ‘Tara’ (ginger lily)**

This bold plant evokes a distinctly tropical feeling. Densely packed bright orange flower spikes emerge from cones of overlapping green bracts held proud at the tips of stalks that are reminiscent of corn plants. *Hedychium* is root hardy but foliage is tender and benefits from being cut back in winter. (Map X)

***Persicaria microcephala* ‘Red Dragon’ (Red Dragon knotweed)**

‘Red Dragon’ is an herbaceous perennial with velvety, ovate leaves of intense wine-purple, dramatically marked with mint-green and silver chevron patterning. Stems reach 2 to 4 feet high and are wine-red. Delicate white flowers resembling baby’s breath have begun to appear but start to emerge more prolifically during August and September. In its wild form, it is found in several Chinese provinces, as well as Bhutan, northeast India, Nepal, and Sikkim. (Map Y)

***Lagerstroemia indica* (crape myrtle)**

This Chinese native was a favorite ornamental tree during the Tang dynasty (618-906 AD), when it was a common sight on palace grounds in the capital. Its placement may reflect the symbolic association of *L. indica* with high governmental positions. As a garden plant, *L. indica* is admired for its dense clusters of crinkled blooms in white, pink, mauve, or purple. Its lengthy flowering cycle peaks during the height of summer heat and is honored by the Chinese common name ‘One Hundred Days Red’. Mottled bark peels away from the smooth-as-silk trunk. Our specimens include the white-flowering ‘Natchez’ at the south end of the *Painted Boat in Misty Rain* and the red-flowering ‘Tuscarora’ due west of the *Hall of Brocade Clouds*. (Map Z)

***Anemone x hybrida* ‘Honorine Jobert’**

While strolling along the walk at the west end of the garden be sure to stop and admire the white blooms of this herbaceous perennial lounging under the gnarled old Magnolia. ‘Honorine Jobert’ produces its simple white blooms from August through October. As result of complex hybridization, it is hardy to 15 degrees F. (Map 2)

***Osmanthus x fortunei***

This well-loved Chinese garden plant is used to scent tea and flavor wine. It is associated with legends about the moon because it blooms at the time of the Chinese ‘mid-autumn’ or ‘moon’ festival. Potentially in bloom in September. Look for tiny, white flowers accented by spiny, dark-green leaves. (Map 3)

***Corydalis* ‘Blackberry Wine’**

While not among plants traditionally found in Chinese gardens, this stunning herbaceous perennial makes an attractive groundcover in lightly shaded sites in our garden. As its name suggests, it has purple, narrowly tubular flowers of about an inch in length. Blue-green leaves are delicate and

fernlike. Fragrant flowers appear in late spring and continue until mid-summer. After a short period of dormancy induced by the heat, flowers can be enjoyed again in autumn as temperatures cool.

**(Map 4)**

***Osmanthus fragrans* var. *aurantiacus* (orange flowering sweet osmanthus)**

With the potential to bloom in September, this well-loved Chinese garden plant is used to scent tea and flavor wine. It is associated with legends about the moon because it blooms at the time of the Chinese 'mid-autumn' or 'moon' festival. The variety *aurantiacus* is perhaps the most heavenly in terms of fragrance with tiny clusters of light orange flowers that make our mouths water with a scent reminiscent of warm apricots. **(Map 5)**

***Nymphaea* sp. (water lily)**

Aquatic plants--most commonly, lilies and lotus--are an important part of a traditional Chinese garden. Water lilies have somewhat heart-shaped leaves that rest flat on the water's surface with their flowers floating complacently among them. A stunning red flowering cultivar can be enjoyed from the Knowing the Fish Pavilion, while white and pink varieties can be found throughout Lake Zither.

**(Map 6)**

***Nelumbo* sp. (lotus)**

Perhaps one of the most stirring sights for visitors to our Garden is the presence of lotus during the summer months. The enormous circular leaves of the lotus are held aloft and shed water like silvery beads of mercury. Immense flowers hover overhead revealing large, cone-shaped seed pods when petals fall away. The distinctive fragrance and grace of the lotus flower has inspired many generations of Chinese poets and artists. It is imbued with the notion of integrity, rising from the mud, traversing murky waters only to reveal an untainted, flawless bloom. **(Map 7)**

***Belamcanda chinensis* (blackberry lily)**

This deciduous perennial is a lily family member with a very iris-like appearance. It sports bright orange flowers accented by maroon spots. The seed capsules will split in the fall to reveal clusters of shiny black seeds that resemble elongated black berries. Our best planting resides under the persimmon at the west end of the Hall of Brocade Clouds terrace. **(Map 8)**

***Hosta plantaginea***

The garden has several fine patches of this fragrant hosta. Look for its white spikes of flowers in front of the large Tai rock just east of the Hall of Brocade Clouds. **(Map 9)**

***Hypericum* 'Hidcote' (St. John's wort)**

This under-celebrated workhorse provides our landscape with throngs of animated yellow flowers in summer. *H. 'Hidcote'* is thought to be a hybrid of garden origin and while not the type commonly found in Chinese gardens it is an excellent, garden-worthy ambassador for the genus. In addition, a related species has recently been popularized in the West as a natural approach to treating depression. The root has long been used in Chinese medicine. **(Map 10)**

***Amorphophallus konjac***

Boy does this single large leaf grab your attention! In time, it will grow to 3 feet in diameter with numerous leaflets. Native to southern China's Yunnan province, the "Snake Palm" or "Voodoo Lily," as it is sometimes called, will with time produce a dramatic flower stalk, up to 4 feet tall. While the flowers themselves are insignificant, the deep purple spathe that surrounds the spike is alluring. Like other plants that are pollinated by flies, when it does flower, it produces a very strong odor until pollination occurs. **(Map 11)**

***Outer Planting Beds:***

***Campsis grandiflora* (Chinese trumpet creeper)**

With flamboyant, rich orange to red trumpet-shaped flowers, *C. grandiflora* is aptly named for its immense and showy flowers which continue for months through the summer and early autumn. This vigorous deciduous climber is native to China and clambers with long, twining branches along the wall in our outer, northeast bed. **(Map 12)**

***Upcoming Horticultural Events:***

***Horticulture Tour***—September 25<sup>th</sup> at 4p.m.

Take a stroll through the garden with one of the Garden's horticulturalists.

***Fall plant sale***— October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009

This will feature many unique and beloved plants of Chinese origin. Knowledgeable volunteers and staff will be on-hand to help you find the right plant so that you can create your very own Chinese Garden at home!

For more details, visit [www.portlandchinesegarden.org](http://www.portlandchinesegarden.org) or call 503.228.8131.

**(see map on next page)**

# PLANT MAP

SEPTEMBER 2009

