



February 2010

Plants of the Month

Tommie Crocus

Crocus tomasinianus

Tommies are small but so early—late winter, really—that you’ll be thrilled to see them pop out of the ground. And there are so many! Tommie crocus naturalize well. Throw a few bulbs on the lawn in fall to create a natural pattern, plant them where they fall, and they will reward your efforts by spreading over the years. That assumes, of course, that you allow the thin blades of foliage to grow, mingled with your grass, until each bulb has time to store energy for the next spring’s floral display. Plant in beds, too. Sun to light shade in well-drained, even sandy soil, is their favorite, but they are adaptable. Fertilizer is unnecessary.



Red Osier Dogwood ‘Cardinal’

Cornus sericea ‘Cardinal’

Superior, possibly the best colored red-twigged dogwood, ‘Cardinal’ warms to a bright cherry red in winter. Its bark is spectacular massed or in winter gardens, especially when backed by green or blue evergreens. This 7-9 foot multi-stemmed shrub produces the typical dogwood leaf, but spring flowers differ from the tree, appearing as white flat clusters of small blooms. These are followed by white berries in late summer. Although flexible about conditions, this native shrub prefers moist conditions. Spreading by underground stems, it is good for erosion control. High heat and drought makes it susceptible to canker disease.



Do you have a plant or insect pest question? Call the Home and Garden Information Center 1-800-342-2507