

Flowering shrubs color the summer

DENNY'S SOAPBOX

By Denny McKeown

June is just around the corner. Summer flowers, both annual and perennial will continue to bloom the balance of this growing season. Have you ever thought of getting lots of summer bloom color from your shrubs?

There are many shrub varieties that give you limited bloom color in the spring. Now, let's look at what's now available for bloom color during the summer. Let's start off with a family of shrubs that the whole family will enjoy.

Butterfly bush: Comes in two growing sizes, standard that grows 6 ft. high and wide and petite that grows 3 to 4 ft. high and wide. This shrub with its lilac sized flower clusters comes in many colors including white, yellow, red, purple, blue and others. They grow and bloom best in 1/2 to a full day of sun. Keep spent flowers pruned off to encourage more bloom.

Hydrangea: There are three summer blooming families of hydrangeas.

- **Paniculata** blooms on new growth, guaranteeing flowers each and every late spring and summer. They have mostly white flowers in June changing to purplish pink from mid-July into September.

- **Oak Leaf** is another great family of hydrangeas. This hydrangea grows 4-6 feet high and wide. It thrives in full sun to half day of shade. The large dark green leaves turn a brilliant shade of red in the fall. Very cold winters can cause the bloom buds to freeze and not bloom the following summer.

- **Macrophylla** (large leaf) is the family of hydrangeas that have caused me to be asked hundreds of times "Why won't my hydrangea bloom?" These are the ones that have 6-inch bloom balls of pink or blue depending on your soils acidity. Two new varieties are the

first to be cold-hardy.

'Endless Summer' – This is the first macrophylla variety to bloom on both old and new growth. This assures you of pink or blue flowers each and every year. They also grow in full sun to light shade.

'Big Daddy' – Here is a macrophylla variety that has blooms 12 inches in diameter.

Rose of Sharon: another family of great summer blooming shrubs.

Hibiscus Rose of Sharon is a tough adaptable shrub or small tree that starts to flower in midsummer. Numerous cultivars provide a variety of colors in double or single blooms. It is adaptable to numerous conditions, but does not tolerate extreme moisture. It can reach 8-12 feet tall and 10 feet wide. Blooms best in a half day of sun or more.

- **'Lavender Chiffon'** – Single, Lavendar flowers. Proven Winner (PW)

- **'Rose Satin'** – Deep rose pink with a red center. (PW)

- **'White Chiffon'** – Pure white flowers with a lacy center. (PW)

- **'Blue Satin'** – Single, royal blue flowers. (PW)

- **'Peony Florus Tree'** – Double pink flowers on standard (grafted to a tree trunk).

Grape myrtle: This shrub or small tree grows best in a sunny location. 'Hopi' and 'Zuni' are great varieties that flower (pink and white, respectively) in the summer and turn dark in the fall.

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