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Plants For Fall Interest

Let's look at some plants with interesting things going on in the fall. I love the fruit of the *Magnolia virginiana* or Swamp Magnolia, as the seed pods turn a brilliant scarlet. Another bonus of this shrubby tree is that it is semi evergreen, and will hold some leaves until re-leaf in the Spring.



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My *Heptacodium* or Seven Son Flower is getting ready to transition from flowers to the maroonish pink fruit in October. Another highlight at my house is the bluish purple fruit of the *Viburnum dentatum*. This is also one of the best wildlife attractors I know of! Last year we saw a buffoonish flock of huge Northern Flickers weighing down the branches to reach the fruit. Bluebirds love this berry!

This is also a good time of the year to enjoy the bright red berries of the *Ilex verticillata* or Michigan Holly, as well as the blue Hollies.

In terms of color, besides the reliable show of the Red and Sugar Maples, I like the pure yellow of *Calycanthus* and *Liriodendron* or Tulip trees. Called Tulip Poplars, they're actually related to the Magnolias.

This year has provided my best fruit set yet for Fringe trees or *Chionanthus virginicus*. Michael Dirr refers to the "fleshy egg-shaped drupes" or fruit, right now a very cool shade of purple. Some of these fruit can last all winter.

