

Give Your Landscape a Little Spring Zing!

As hard as it may be to believe, given the weather we've been having (ice pellets!), Spring is right around the corner. And here in the Deep South, Spring not only comes early, it comes with a host of blooming trees and shrubs to herald the new season and chase the winter blahs away.

Many native trees give early spring color, while also providing sustenance to our pollinators. These include Basswood (*Tilia americana*), with white blooms on a large-growing shade tree, Big Flower Silverbell (*Halasia carolina*) and Chickasaw Plum, both bearing masses of white blooms on small-to-medium sized trees. Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) is a local favorite, with clusters of pink flowers that appear before the leaves. Fringe Tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*) is also known as Greybeard, because of its long drooping clusters of fringy white blooms. Although not a native, flowering cherry is world famous for its spring show. In our area, Taiwan Cherry (*Prunus campanulata*) is a very successful cultivar.



Taiwan Cherry



Pink Native Azalea

There are also lots of Spring-blooming shrubs. Everyone is familiar with Azaleas, but more interesting than the evergreen types are the native Rhododendrons, with masses of honeysuckle-type flowers, in bright reds, oranges, yellows, and whites. Speaking of honeysuckle, don't neglect Winter Honeysuckle (*Lonicera*

fragrantissima). The name says it all; sprays of powerfully fragrant flowers on arching evergreen branches. Bridal wreath (*Spirea* spp.) and Wegelia are old favorites, and flowering Quince also has a well deserved place in Southern gardens. From the largest estate to the tiniest pocket-garden, there is a Spring blooming treasure that will fit the space and bring Spring cheer!



Clarke's White Flowering Quince