

## Winter Landscapes

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Photo By Ed Ransom,  
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The quiet darkness of winter is a time to appreciate a different aspect of our garden landscape.

Winter is a time of dormancy and replenishment as the rains and cooler temperatures revive plants stressed by the heat of summer.

Yet during this season, we may still feast our eyes on distinctive displays.

Take a daily discovery stroll around your garden to enjoy new surprises.

Watch for blossoms on shrubs including Arbutus, Grevillia and Viburnum tinus.

Delight in emerging bulbs or the promising buds on Camellias and Hellebores.

Discover the Narcissus, Calendula and tiny Violets that add color throughout the winter.

You may also find Bergenia, Lavender and Rosemary in bloom.

The sculptural shapes of deciduous trees and shrubs create an artistic tableau:

The limbs of native Red Twig Dogwoods turn a vivid crimson; Coral Bark Maple trunks display shades from copper to rust.

Crape Myrtle and Paperbark Maple barks peel in an attractive manner.

The weeping form of Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum dissectum*) gracefully attracts attention.

Without the distraction of flowers, the foliage of perennial trees, shrubs and grasses becomes the focus.

Native fern fronds, Tansy and glossy *Acanthus mollis* leaves add interesting textures.

The rich eggplant purple leaves on Chocolate Chip *Ajuga* glisten in the light.

The cool blues of Bush Germander, Lavenders, Blue Spruce, *Salvia chamaedryoides* and frosty Lamb's Ears become highlights amidst the greens:

Ornamental grasses star in the winter garden: the dried stalks and plumes of *Miscanthus* varieties and Rattlesnake grass capture and reflect the light, as does the variegated foliage of grasses such as *Carex* and Bulbous Oat.

The red-tipped blades of Japanese Blood grass add movement as they dance in the wind.

Black Mondo grass, cascading bronze and Toffee Twist *Carexes* and native California Fescue show off in rock gardens.

Many plants change color during this time in an array of hues from reds, mauves and purples to rust, oranges and yellows: some examples are hardy Cranesbill Geraniums, Star Jasmine, *Salvia greggii*, *Abelia*, *Mahonia*, and *Sempervivums* (hardy Alpine succulents).

*Huchera* hybrids (Coral Bells) show leaves in lovely peach, mauve, copper, maroon and lime as well as variegated soft greens.

Lingering *Cotoneaster* berries add a red accent while *Callicarpa* berries add vivid purple.

For an easy splash of color, plant a few *Violas* and Pansies.

What additions would augment the beauty of your winter garden?