

Rick Vuyst's favorite "3 to 4 season" plants

With our busy lifestyles I believe your landscape should work as hard as you do. I also believe that mono-cultures are not a good idea in the landscape and that as in life, diversity is better. Each plant has its season in the sun when it takes center stage. Within a diverse group problems do not spread like wildfire and the diversity presents continual visual interest as each plant plays its role. All these things said there are some plants that step up and deliver a long season, in some cases, multiple seasons of interest in the landscape. A good landscape uses approximately 30% of its foundation in evergreens providing the gravitas and back drop of interest. In some cases the evergreens can serve as a focal point for 4 seasons of interest such as a Weeping Spruce or a conifer that looks like an evergreen but is deciduous with fall color like a Weeping Larch. Broadleaf evergreens can serve this role too with Rhododendrons and Holly as examples providing year long interest. Aside from the understood importance and foundation provided by conifers and broadleaf evergreens, other plants can provide workhorse interest in the landscape, many with a key blooming season as well as great fall color or colorful season long foliage and stems. Also remember well placed splashes or pockets of Annuals, Herbs and Bulbs add to the show to make your landscape a headliner. Here is my list (53 suggestions) for some landscape hardy favorites that come back and perform year after year as I call it the "gift that keeps giving". Hardy to our hardiness zones in Michigan these plants are listed as "Woody" landscape plants (W) or "Herbaceous" Perennial plants (P).

Achillea Yarrow	P
Agastache	P
Ajuga	P
Allium/Mountain Garlic	P
Aralia	P
Azalea Deciduous Northern Lights	W
Baptisia	P
Bergenia	P
Brunnera	P
Carex	P
Chamaecyparis Gold Mop Cypress	W
Coneflower Echinacea	P
Dogwood Red or Gold Twig	W
Fothergilla	W
Ginkgo	P
Hakonechloa	P
Hellebores	P
Heuchera	P
Hops	P
Hosta	P
Hydrangea Oakleaf	W
Hydrangea Panicle (Quickfire, Limelight, etc)	W
Hydrangea serrata Tuff Stuff	W

Hypericum St Johns Wort	W
Itea	W
Japanese Maple	W
Juneberry/Serviceberry	W
Lambs Ear Stachys	P
Lamium	P
Ligularia	P
Liriope	P
Nepeta	P
Nishiki Willow	W
Ornamental Grasses	P
Own root Landscape Roses	W
Paperbark Maple	W
Perovskia Russian Sage	P
Persicaria	P
Physocarpus Ninebark	W
Pulmonaria	P
Rosa Rugosa	W
Sambucus Elderberry	W
Sedums	P
Succulents (such as Sedums)	P
Sweet Autumn Clematis	W
Sweet Woodruff	P
Syringa Landscape Lilacs/rebloomers	W
Tri Color Beech	W
Viburnum	W
Weigela Wine and Roses or My Monet	W
Wisteria	W
Witchhazel	W
Yucca Golden Sword	P