Summersweet, Ruby Spice

Clethra alnifolia 'Ruby Spice'



Summersweet, Ruby Spice flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 6 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 3b

Other Names: Sweet Pepperbush

Description:

One of the most fragrant of all garden shrubs with showy spikes of sweetly scented deep pink flowers bloom in late summer when little else is in flower at that time; a very hardy variety, neat, tidy habit of growth and good fall color

Ornamental Features

Summersweet, Ruby Spice has masses of beautiful spikes of fragrant ruby-red flowers rising above the foliage from mid to late summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. It has green deciduous foliage. The glossy round leaves turn an outstanding harvest gold in the fall.



Summersweet, Ruby Spice flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Summersweet, Ruby Spice is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a shapely oval form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering

Summersweet, Ruby Spice is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Summersweet, Ruby Spice will grow to be about 6 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.



Summersweet, Ruby Spice in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. This plant should be periodically fertilized throughout the active growing season with a specially-formulated acidic fertilizer. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selection of a native North American species.