Old Fashioned Weigela
(Weigela florida)

Alex X. Niemiera, Associate Professor, Department of Horticulture

Summary:
- Foliage: Deciduous broadleaf
- Height: 9 feet
- Spread: 12 feet
- Shape: upright, spreading

Old fashioned weigela is a large shrub with a coarse texture and showy spring flowers. This plant is best suited for a shrub border. There are several new cultivars which are improved versions (dwarf, foliage and flower characteristics) compared to the species.

Plant Needs:
- Zone: 5 to 8
- Light: Partial shade to full sun
- Moisture: Moist to dry
- Soil Type: Sandy, loam, or clay
- pH Range: 3.7 to 7.0

Functions:
- Suggested uses for this plant include border, screen, and massing.

Planting Notes:
- Tolerates wide range of soil and light conditions.
- Pollution tolerant.
- Prefers well-drained soil and full sun.

Care:
- Easy to grow.
- Prune one-third of the oldest wood each spring after flowering to maintain plant shape and control dieback.

Problems:
- No serious pest or disease problems.

Alternatives:
- Consult local garden centers, historic or public gardens and arboreta, regarding cultivars and related species that grow well in your area.
- Cultivars of Weigela florida:
  - `Bristol Ruby' has ruby red flowers.
  - `Variegata' grows up to 4 feet tall. Foliage color is variegated with yellow. Flowers are pink.
  - Wine and Roses® has pink flowers and dark burgundy leaves on a compact plant that matures at 5 feet tall.

Comments:
- Most of the weigelas in the nursery trade are hybrids developed to produce superior flowers. The stems are usually covered with flowers for a short period of time in the spring.
- Best used in a shrub border or in large groups. Also serves as good background for smaller plants. Unless one buys a variegated cultivar (non-green or multi-colored foliage), this species is in the same limited showiness category as forsythia, i.e., showy in flower for a few weeks and then non-descript for the rest of the year.

This material was developed by Carol Ness as part of the Interactive Design and Development Project funded by the Kellogg Foundation.