

Vanhoutte Spirea (*Spiraea x vanhouttei*)

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Summary:

Foliage: Deciduous broadleaf

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 12 feet

Shape: Vase-shaped with arching branches

Vanhoutte spirea is a large shrub with graceful arching branches. Its main claim to fame is its abundant and showy display of white flowers in spring. This species is best used in a shrub border or in mass.

Plant Needs:

Zone: 4 to 8

Light: Partial shade to full sun

Moisture: Wet, moist, or dry

Soil Type: Sandy, loam, or clay

pH Range: 3.7 to 7.0

Functions:

Suggested uses for this plant include border, hedge, screen, and massing.

Planting Notes:

Transplants readily. Adapts to a wide range of soil conditions.

Plant in full sun for best flowering.

Care:

Easily maintained. Occasionally need to control aphid problem in spring.

Prune after flowering in the spring.

Problems:

Relatively free of insect and disease pests.

Aphids are occasionally a problem in the spring.

Alternatives:

Consult local garden centers historic or public gardens and arboreta, regarding cultivars and related species that grow well in your area.

Related species:

Bumald spirea (*Spiraea x bumalda*) 'Anthony Waterer' is the most popular small spirea. It grows to about 2 feet tall and has clusters of red flowers. 'Gold Flame', about 4 feet tall at maturity, is a popular cultivar because the new foliage emerges a very bright and noticeable yellow and fade to yellow green. There are many other showy cultivars of this species.

Bridalwreath spirea (*Spiraea prunifolia*) has double, white flowers, lustrous, green foliage, and orange fall color.

Comments:

Spireas are among the easiest flowering shrubs to grow. Vanhoutte spirea is one of the most commonly grown spirea, due to its masses of white flowers and graceful, arching growth habit. There are many species and cultivars of spirea that have very showy foliage (e.g., yellow, variegated) as well as showy flowers. Spireas are exceptionally hardy and therefore the smaller forms are good candidates for container gardening in which containers may be left outside all winter.

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