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Forsythias. Probably no hardy shrubs which have been introduced from the Old World into our gardens can equal or surpass the Forsythias in cheerful beauty, which is developed at a season when there are comparatively few other competitors so attractive. The beautiful golden glow of their early bloom attracts and pleases almost everyone who is acquainted with them, and they are destined to have wide popularity because of their attractive flowers, generally clean foliage, and comparative freedom from insect or fungous diseases. More important still as a circumstance in favor of popularity and wide distribution is the fact that the Forsythias may be propagated by division with greater ease or facility than most other trees or shrubs cultivated in our gardens. Least trouble will be found by propagating from cuttings of the ripe wood taken in fall or winter or very early spring and planted in the open ground. Of course where the ground freezes in winter and cuttings are taken at that season they may be kept fresh by heeling in or burying in moist earth in a cellar or pit until seasonable time to plant out. Good sturdy well rooted plants should develop before the following autumn. Propagation may also be effected by taking green cuttings in summer and growing them in a frame, a method entailing more trouble or labor than when cuttings of ripe wood are used.

As in nature's methods propagation may be easily brought about by the process of layering, and it will be found that a slender arching species, like *Forsythia suspensa*, commonly forms roots on the stems or tips, where they touch the ground, in this way forming new plants on the periphery of the original stem. Thus a single plant of an arching or trailing species may in time cover a large area if no competing plants interfere. The facility with which this genus of plants may be propagated makes their dissemination or distribution almost independent of the commercial nurseryman, excepting in the case of newly introduced species or improved forms which are new or little known.

Forsythias require little pruning except to cut away weak or old stems. It should be remembered that flower buds are formed during

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the preceding summer, so that cutting back of the stems should be done immediately after flowering in spring. Pruning in autumn or winter involves the destruction of some of the best flowering branches for the next spring.

If it is desired to raise plants from seed it must be borne in mind that the resulting plants are not always just like the parent and some may be inferior. The seeds of Forsythias are large, flat and somewhat winged and are probably only disseminated by wind agency, or by being carried by water or moving soil during freshets.

All of the known species of Forsythia have yellow flowers, varying somewhat in size, form, and shade of color of blossoms in different species and varieties. To the botanist and close observer of Nature the flowers have peculiar interest in the fact that where grown from seed some plants have short styles (microstyle) while in others the styles are longer and more prominent (macrostyle). This is a provision of Nature to insure cross pollination of the species. The general habit of growth of the various types is one of the most important features to be considered by the planter.

The Forsythias have been described as hardy but there is a limit to their endurance of such cold as we often have in northern New England. While the plants may endure lower temperatures, in some cases the flower buds are very likely to be destroyed if subjected to a temperature of 15 or 20 degrees below zero (Fahrenheit). In a climate like that of the interior of northern New England, or that which prevails at Montreal or Ottawa, Canada, the Forsythias may be classed as only half hardy, being killed to snow line, at least, in winter. Occasionally the flower buds have been killed in the Arboretum while the plants have shown little injury. What we call hardiness may in some measure be affected by location, drainage, maturity of wood, length of season and other factors.

The earliest species to flower this season was *Forsythia ovata* which has been described as the hardiest of the genus. It is not yet well known in cultivation and whether the plants and flower buds will withstand 15 or 20 degrees below zero or lower remains to be proved by thorough test. As growing at the Arboretum it is a rather compact upright or arching bush, 6 to 8 feet high. Its habit is much like that of *F. intermedia* already well known and superior to *F. ovata* by reason of its larger, deeper yellow and more profusely produced flowers which, however, may be a week or ten days later.

Forsythia intermedia itself is not considered as a true species but is a hybrid of the rigid upright growing *F. viridissima* and the more free growing, slender, long-stemmed *F. suspensa*. Of this hybrid there are several cultivated forms, one of the best and most floriferous being that known as *Forsythia intermedia spectabilis*. It usually bears an abundance of rich golden yellow flowers. Another form, known as *F. intermedia primulina*, bears flowers of a pale yellow or primrose color. It is generally considered less desirable than *spectabilis* except by those who prefer the lighter shade of yellow color.



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