

Large Shrubs (8—15')
Deciduous
Introduced
Map #30

Forsythia
(*Forsythia X intermedia*)
Family: *Oleaceae*



Leaves: simple, toothed, usually on the upper on-half, long and narrow, smooth; some species with maroon fall color.

Buds: opposite, shingled but loosely scaled, pointed, tannish yellow-green, borne several together in the axils.

Stems: tannish yellow-green, slightly ridged, prominent lenticels; pith hollow, spongy or chambered depending on species.

Bark: tannish yellow-green, warty with lenticels.

Flowers: simple, yellow, perfect; very early spring before leaves; may be damaged by winter temperatures (especially above the snowline) or spring freezes.

Fruits: insignificant.

Habit: irregular with long, pendulous branches; wider than tall.

Culture: Very adaptable. Full sun. Hardiness (particularly the flower buds) must be considered when selecting a forsythia cultivar as it varies greatly among cultivars. Sometimes only flower on lower portion of the plant where snow provided flower bud insulation. Prune by renewal or rejuvenation.

Miscellaneous: Vivid yellow flowers before the leaves proclaim the beginning of spring. Cut stems are great for late winter "forcing". Is generally a plant of single season interest although the better cultivars have burgundy fall color.

Cultivars: Selected for smaller size, flowerbud cold hardiness and flower color. 'Northern Gold' - A cultivar of more upright habit (6—8') and flower buds that are hardy to at least -30°F. 'Meadowlark' - Flower buds that are hardy to at least -35°F produce large bright yellow flowers. A large growing cultivar (8—10') with maroon-purple fall color. 'Sunrise' -An excellent selection with an attractive mounded form that is more compact (4—6'). Flower buds are hardy to approximately -26°F. Develops an attractive maroon fall color.

Related species: *Forsythia viridissima* 'Bronxensis' - suckering for massing, irregular flowering, small flowers; leaves stacked in pairs alternating up stems.



‘Northern Gold’



‘Sunrise’



‘Meadowlark’



F. viridissima ‘Bronxensis’

Credits: Photos from: www.midwestlandscapeplants.org and various other .edu websites unless noted. Text from: "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants" by Michael Dirr; "Tree Identification Characteristics (abridged)" from the University of Illinois Extension; www.midwestlandscapeplants.org; and misc. other sources. This publication may not be sold except to cover the cost of reproduction when used as part of an educational program of the University of Wisconsin-Extension.