

2015

DELAWARE

NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

Plant of the Year

This year marks Delaware Nursery & Landscape Association's Twenty-First Annual Plant of the Year selection. The 2015 Herbaceous plant is *Eurybia divaricata*. The 2015 Woody plant is *Carpinus caroliniana*. These plants were chosen because they are particularly well suited to thrive in Delaware.

Eurybia divaricata (*Aster divaricatus*)

White Wood Aster

This fantastic native ground cover can be found from Maine to Georgia in deciduous woods and along roadsides. White wood aster has heart-shaped leaves borne along thin, purple-black cascading branches. The cultivar 'Eastern Star' is shorter than the species and has deep dark shining mahogany stems. Small star-like white flowers with yellow centers are borne in profusion from mid-July into early October. It is one of the few asters that grows in the shade, but takes sun as well, so in a new planting under young trees, the white wood aster will thrive and continue to thrive as the trees cast more and more shade. White wood aster grows in average to dry soils, and works well as a ground cover at the edge of the woods or at the front of a border growing through other plants. It attracts butterflies, is somewhat deer resistant and makes a good filler in a cut flower arrangement.



Photo by Rick Darke

Carpinus caroliniana

Ironwood

Ironwood is a small-medium sized, wide-spreading tree that is native to the eastern half of the United States. Ironwood, sometimes called Blue Beech or Muscledwood, is named for its thin, bluish grey, sinewy bark that looks like flexed muscles. Leaves are pointed, serrated and dark green, often lustrous, in summer and change to yellow, orange, red, and reddish purple in fall. Ironwood can be difficult to transplant and should be moved balled and burlapped or from a container in late winter to early spring. This handsome tree is usually found as an understory plant along rivers and streams, where it withstands periodic flooding. Michael Dirr has seen this tree in a wide variety of landscape settings and believes it is quite adaptable. This tree has a lot to offer our landscapes in subtle beauty.



Photo by Rick Darke



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