

Plants grown for their winter interest

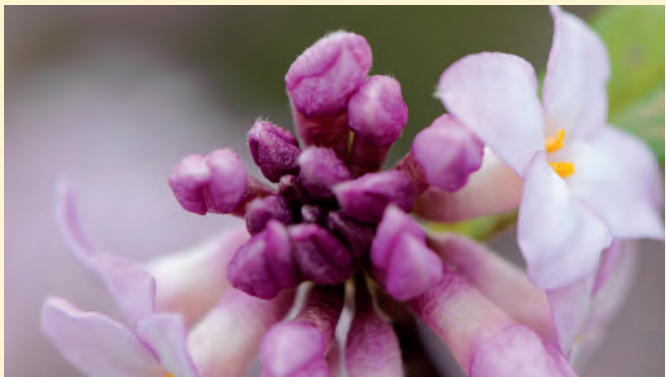
The Winter Garden is at its best from December to April, when plants equipped to survive in harsh winter conditions can show off some of their best attributes.



Snowdrops, *Galanthus nivalis*, contain antifreeze proteins in the plant cell walls. In harsh winter conditions these proteins bind to ice in the cells preventing the crystals from growing and damaging the plant tissue.



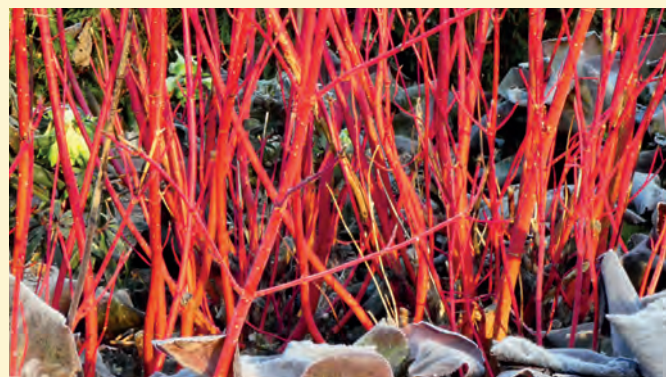
Mahonia x media 'Winter Sun' flowers in the spring in mountainous regions. In Britain, when early winter cold spells are broken by milder days, it is fooled into thinking it's spring, and the buds open.



Plants with highly fragrant flowers like *Daphne bhollua* 'Jaqueline Postill', make good plants for urban areas, where they attract winter pollinators such as the buff tailed bumblebee, *Bombus terrestris*.



Viburnum x bodnantense 'Dawn' is a cross which has inherited its strong scent from one parent plant, *Viburnum farreri*, and its branching habit from the other, *Viburnum grandiflorum*.



Willows and dogwoods like *Cornus alba* 'Sibirica' are cut back, or pollarded in the spring, to encourage fresh growth of coloured stems the next year.



Evergreen leaves like those of the holly, *Ilex aquifolium* 'Argentea Marginata' have a waxy surface or cuticle to stop them drying out whilst they continue to photosynthesize over winter.

A full Winter Garden plant list is available from the entrance gates, or can be downloaded from the Garden's website.

Winter Garden

The Winter Garden was carefully designed to bring together coloured stems, foliage and bark, variations in structure and texture, winter flowers and intoxicating scents



This garden's design entices us in to a world of winter colour, making the most of the light from the low lying sun and capturing the scent from winter blooms.

Catching the winter sunlight

First opened in 1979, the Winter Garden was landscaped to provide a shallow valley open to the south, allowing the low winter sunlight to flood in and enhance the plants' vibrant colours. The gently meandering path runs east-west, so the planting on one side is lit directly by the sun and plants on the other are back-lit, with the sun shining through them.

Capturing winter scents

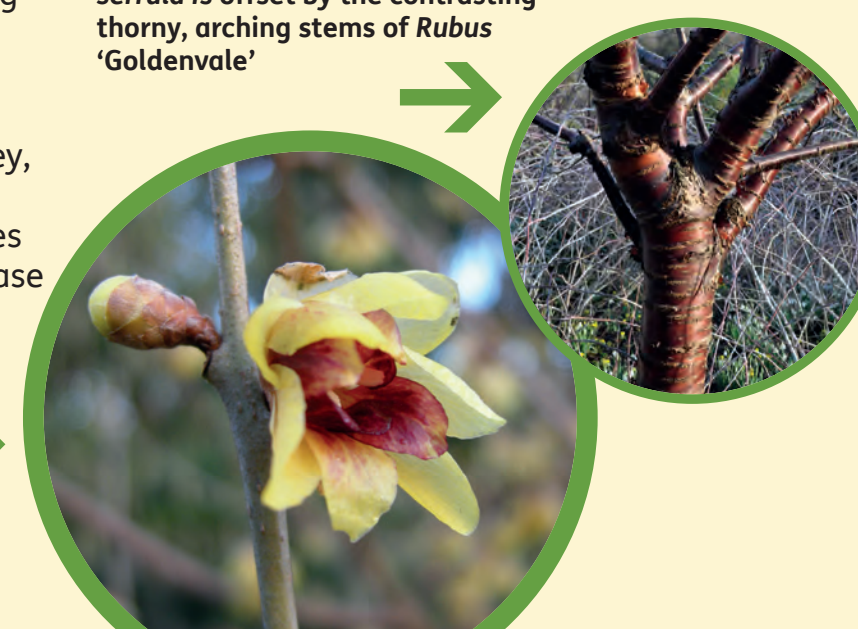
As the winter sun streams into the valley, the sloping sides and high hedges help hold in the sun's warmth. More sun gives more heat - which encourages the release of scent from winter flowering plants.

Creating architectural interest

Careful positioning of plants with contrasting, or complementary structures and textures, provides architectural interest in the garden throughout the winter months.

The smooth, shiny bark of *Prunus serrula* is offset by the contrasting thorny, arching stems of *Rubus* 'Goldenvale'

Wintersweet, *Chimonanthus praecox* flowers, have an intense fragrance



The Winter Garden Trail

1. A honey-like aroma comes from the snowdrop *Galanthus* 'S. Arnott', which are dotted between the plum tinged elephant ear leaves of *Berginia* 'Bressingham Ruby'.

2. The bright red stems of *Cornus alba* 'Sibirica' provide a blaze of colour right throughout the winter.

3. The polished mahogany-brown trunks and branches of the Tibetan cherry trees, *Prunus serrula*, shine against the chaotic ashen stems of *Rubus* 'Golden Vale'

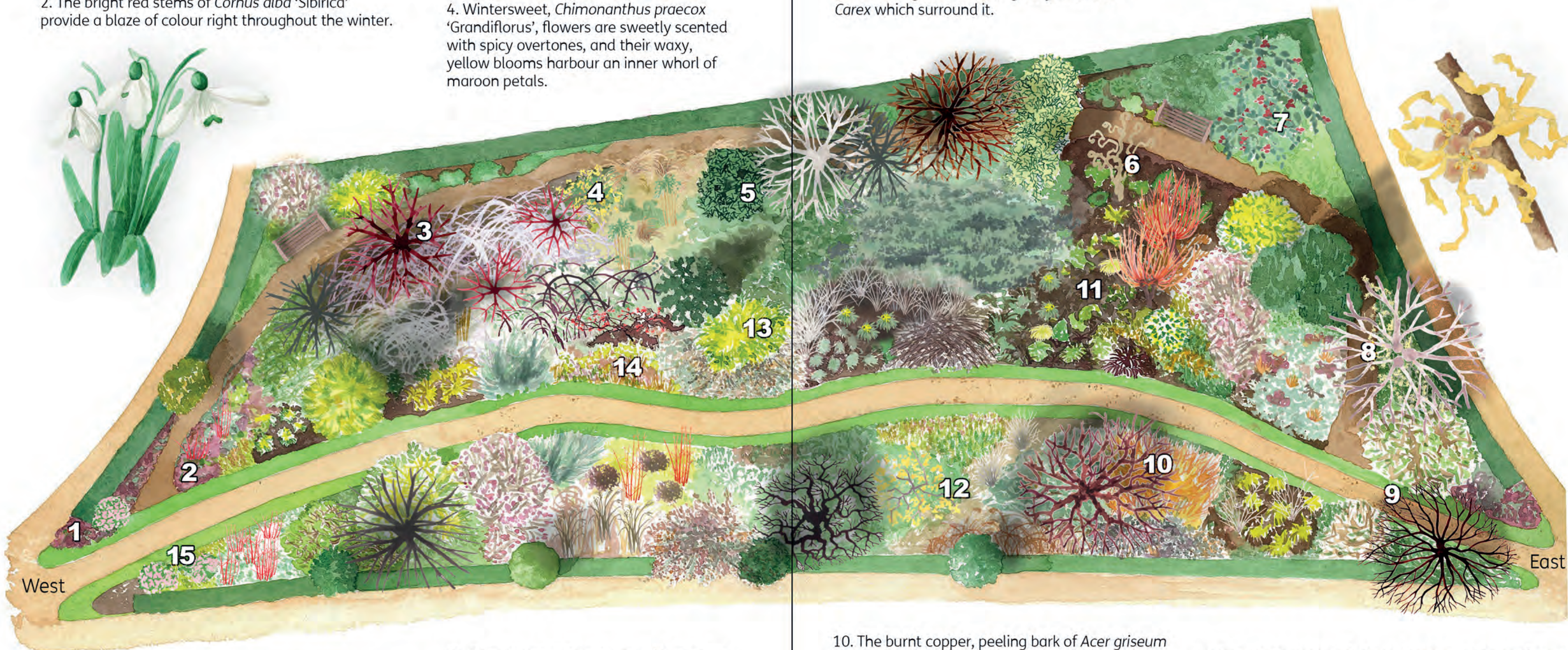
4. Wintersweet, *Chimonanthus praecox* 'Grandiflorus', flowers are sweetly scented with spicy overtones, and their waxy, yellow blooms harbour an inner whorl of maroon petals.

5. *Colletia paradoxa*, from South America, has unusual modified stems which resemble jet-planes and provide architectural interest throughout the year.

6. The twisted, whirligig stems of the corkscrew hazel, *Corylus avellana* 'Contorta', stand out against the fine grassy leaves of *Carex* which surround it.

7. The dark green foliage of *Cotoneaster lacteus*, complement the bunches of scarlet berries which persist right through the winter.

8. The horizontal stems of *Hamamelis japonica* 'Zuccariniana' contrast with the vertical trunks of *Betula albosinensis* var. *septantrionalis*.



14. Brass-coloured, spidery witchhazel, *Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Jelena' make a bold impact against the dusty pink *Erica darleyensis* 'Kramer's Rote' flowers in the foreground.

15. The heady scent of the Japanese paper plant, *Daphne bholua* 'Jacqueline Postill', flowers are a dominant fragrance at the west end of the Winter Garden.

12. *Forsythia giralidiana* is one of the earliest forsythias to bloom, producing delicately scented, creamy yellow flowers on bare stems.

13. Lemon-yellow spires of *Mahonia x media* 'Winter Sun' flowers complement the blue-green *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Wisselii' foliage, and the red berries and bronze foliage of *Berberis wilsoniae*, in the foreground.

10. The burnt copper, peeling bark of *Acer griseum* is offset by the yellows and oranges of *Cornus sanguinea* 'Midwinter Fire', to its left, and the fuzzy, burgundy stems of the Japanese wineberry, *Rubus phoenicolasius*, to its right.

11. Two groups of pollarded willows, *Salix alba* var. *vitellina* 'Britzensis', frame the dell, separated by low lying drifts of *Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens', and *Helleborus foetidus* 'Wester Flisk', interspersed with clumps of snowdrops.

9. The sweet aroma of winter honeysuckle engulfs you at the easterly end of the Winter Garden. It's produced by the *Lonicera x purpusii*, strategically planted either side of the path.

