

# 4 Seasons of Interest in a Native Garden

Plant Selection for Structure

Beyond the Bloom & Wildlife Benefit

By: Susie Van de Riet



# Interest Defined

- What is *Interest*?

In the garden design world:

“Visual, sensory, or emotional elements that capture attention, evoke curiosity, and prevent the landscape from feeling or appearing monotonous.”

“Dynamic interplay of plants, structures, & textures that draws the eye and encourages people to explore the space.”

# Interest Types

- We've got our blooms during the spring, summer, fall!
  - So, what is interesting in the garden when we look mostly beyond the bloom and wildlife benefit across all 4 seasons?
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- Shrubs/Trees
  - Seeds/Dormant Plant Materials
  - Bark
  - Semi-Evergreen/Evergreen Natives
  - Berries/Fruit
  - Fall Color
  - Different plant textures
  - Layered planting layout for theme/structure throughout!

# Winter Presence

(December-March)

## Snow-Covered Landscape



# Winter Presence

## Snow-Adorned Plant Material

*Asclepias sp.;*  
Marsh milkweed



*Liatris sp.;*  
Blazing star



*Echinacea sp.;*  
Coneflower



# Winter Presence

Vines/Trellis'  
(Narrow Beds)



*Lonicera sempervirens*;  
Coral honeysuckle vine

# Winter Presence

## Yes, Blooms!

*Hamamelis vernalis*;  
Ozark witch hazel



*Salix humilis*;  
Prairie willow

# Winter Presence

## Seeds & Dormant Plant Material



*Schizachyrium scoparium*;  
Little bluestem

# Winter Presence

## Seeds & Dormant Plant Material

*Solidago sp.;*  
Goldenrod

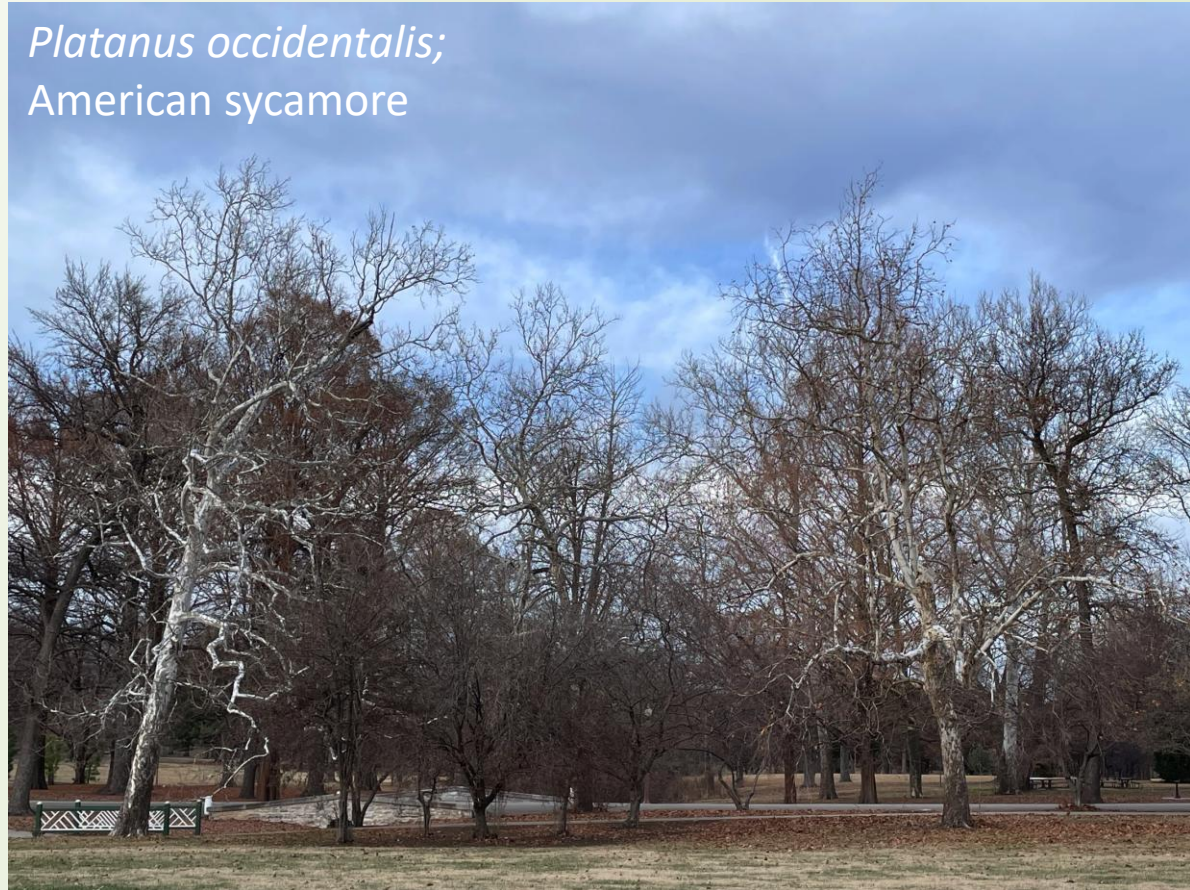


# Winter Presence

## Bark!



*Platanus occidentalis*;  
American sycamore



# Winter Presence Bark!



*Physocarpus opulifolius*;  
ninebark

# Winter Presence

Semi-Evergreen/Evergreen Native Plants  
Use as borders or plant in groups (& repeat)  
for structure!



# Winter Presence

Semi-Evergreen/Evergreen Native Plants

Use as borders or plant in groups (& repeat) for structure!



*Packera obovata*;  
groundsel

# Winter Presence

Semi-Evergreen/Evergreen Native Plants

Use as borders or plant in groups (& repeat) for structure!



# Winter Habitat

- What makes up an ideal *habitat*  
= Place where a living thing lives/thrives?
- What do insects/arthropods/birds & other wildlife need for an ideal habitat?  
(Hint: It's very similar to our own needs)

- Food
- Shelter
- Space
- Pesticide-free zone



# Winter Habitat

A photograph of a snowy backyard. In the foreground, a wooden fence is covered in snow. To the left, a shed with a snow-covered roof is visible. The yard is filled with snow-covered plants, including a large tire in the center. The background shows more houses and trees under a grey, overcast sky.

How do we best provide that in our winter landscape?

- A variety of plant types (trees/shrubs/forbs/grasses)
- Leave dormant materials of plants standing
- Don't spring into clean-up too soon
- Leave leaves where it makes sense to do so

# Winter Habitat



*Symphyotrichum* sp.;  
Asters

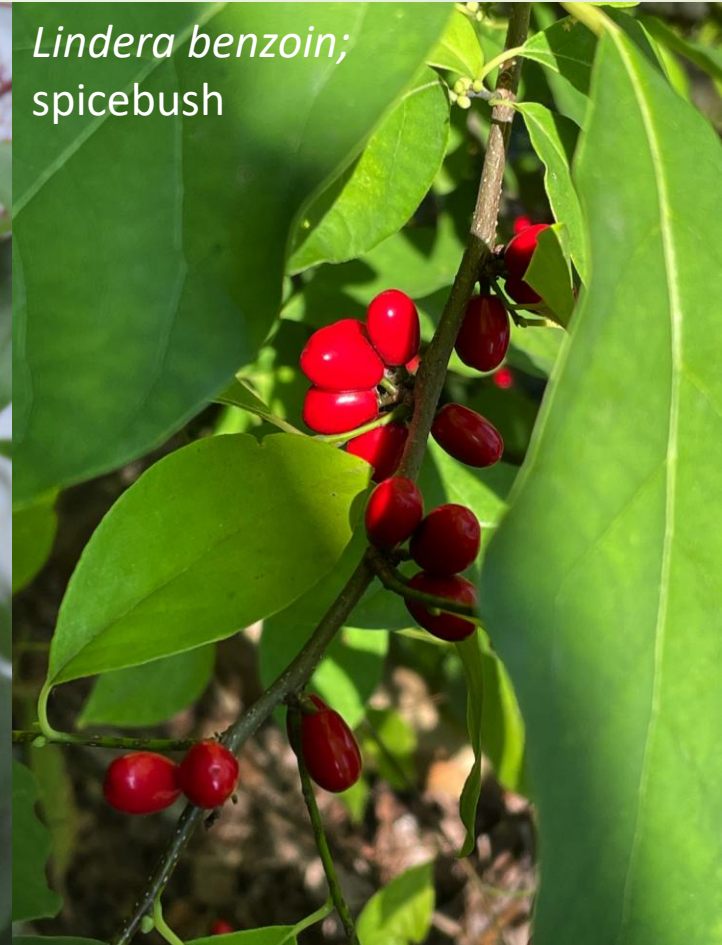
# Spring Berries



# Summer/Fall Berries



*Sambucus canadensis*;  
elderberry



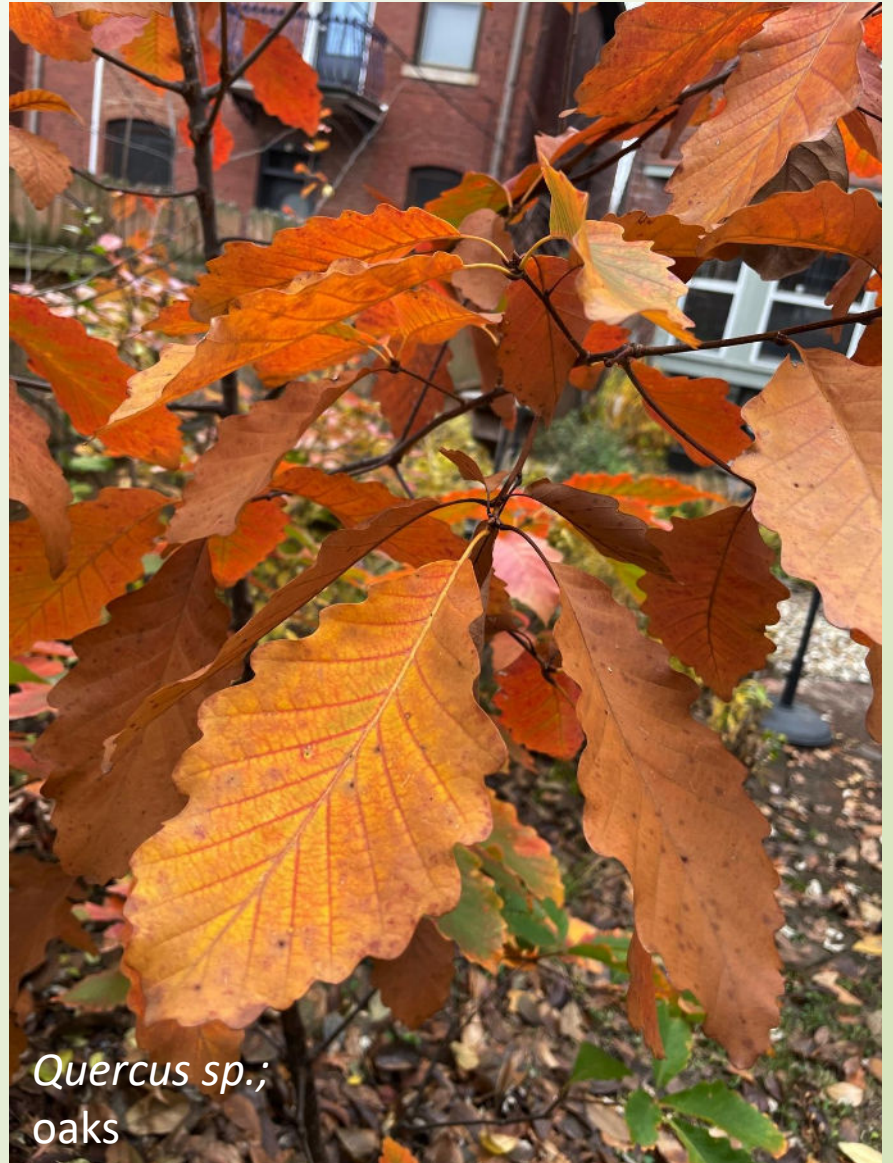
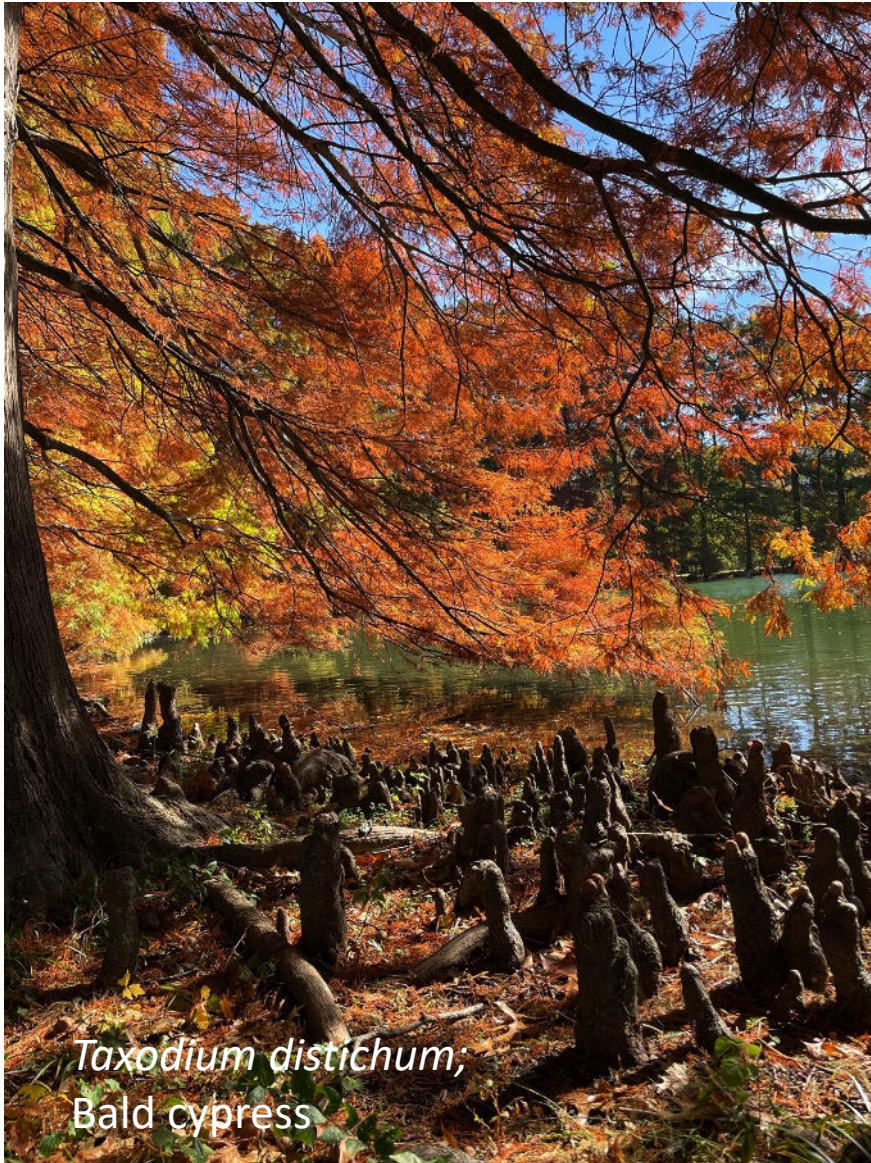
*Lindera benzoin*;  
spicebush

# Summer/Fall Berries



*Callicarpa americana*;  
American beautyberry

# Fall Color



# Fall Color



# Fall Color



*Cercis canadensis*;  
Eastern redbud

# Fall Color



# Fall Color

Smaller plants have bigger impact in clusters

*Gillenia stipulata*;  
Indian physic



# Texture/Color

Smaller plants have bigger impact in clusters



# Texture/Color

Smaller plants have bigger impact in clusters



# Texture/Color

Smaller plants have bigger impact in clusters



*Muhlenbergia capillaris*,  
Pink muhlygrass

# Fall/Winter

Saving One of My Favorites for Last:  
Frost Flower!



# Fall/Winter

Saving One of My Favorites for Last:  
Frost Flower!



# Layering For Year-Round Appeal

- What is layering or layered planting in garden design?

“The technique of arranging plants and features by height, shape, texture, and bloom time to create depth, dimension, & lushness.”

We have 4 seasons with which to apply layering, arranging different plant species so we have a sort of undulation & movement of plant traits/heights/textures/structures across our landscape.

# Layering For Year-Round Appeal

## Different Textures/Plant Groupings



# Layering For Year-Round Appeal

## Different Textures/Plant Groupings



# Layering For Year-Round Appeal

## Different Textures/Plant Groupings



# Layering For Year-Round Appeal

Different  
Textures/Plant  
Groupings



# Layering For Year-Round Appeal

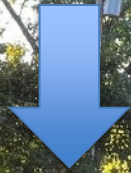
## Different Textures/Plant Groupings

*Trandescantia ohiensis*;  
Ohio spiderwort

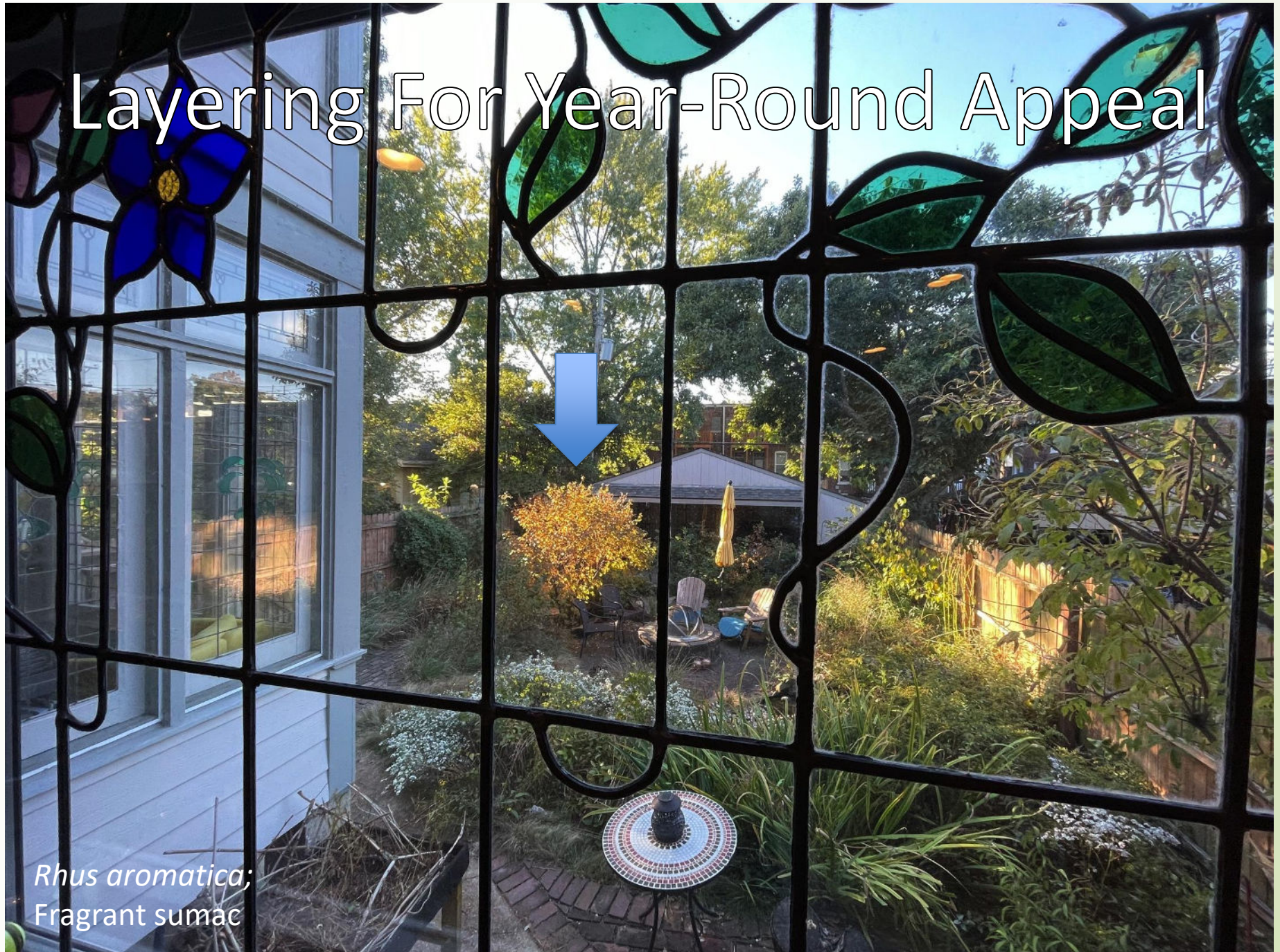
*Coreopsis lanceolata*;  
Lanceleaf coreopsis



# Layering For Year-Round Appeal



*Rhus aromatica*;  
Fragrant sumac



# Layering For Year- Round Appeal

Winter landscape –  
Trees & Shrubs add  
physical structure when  
everything else has  
been squished by snow,  
until....



# Layering For Year- Round Appeal

Spring & summer come along, & we have other groupings, lower layers of plantings showing up, and then...



# Layering For Year- Round Appeal

Fall starts to settle in, & trees/shrubs are beginning their fall show, some plants are turning colors, some still blooming, & some going dormant...



# Layering For Year- Round Appeal

Bringing us into winter - a restful time for most plants (and hopefully us!), but also a time where the landscape can still hold much interest.



Questions?





# Thank You!

Susie Van de Riet

St. Louis Native Plants LLC

[StLNativePlants@gmail.com](mailto:StLNativePlants@gmail.com)



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