

Daphnes are small to mid-sized shrubs prized for their clusters of four-petaled flowers. Winter Daphne and the summer-blooming Rock Daphne are probably the best-known members of the family, but Sky Nursery offers many other varieties to entice you. Bloom time, bloom color, and plant habit vary widely among varieties; see list below for details.

Most daphnes like full or part sun. They prefer rich soil with excellent aeration and drainage. If possible, work in at least 3 inches of Cedar Grove Compost, Fertil-Mulch®, or other organic matter before planting. If your soil is particularly heavy, you may wish to add some coarse sand to your planting area to improve the drainage. Into the bottom of your planting hole mix some organic rose and flower fertilizer. Be sure to plant your daphne so the top of the rootball is at the top of the soil level.

Daphnes do not like to be kept soggy or to be mulched too heavily. A light layer of mulch is good, but do not mulch deeper than an inch. Do not allow the mulch to touch the daphne's trunk! Planting or mulching too deeply can kill your daphne or retard its flowering, as can poor drainage (the most common problem seen in daphne autopsies).

Regular feeding is helpful. It is best to use an organic rose and flower fertilizer in the spring and again in the fall. Follow the package instructions for your size plant. If your soil is acidic, scatter a handful of dolomite lime around each plant in the fall. Most daphnes do not like to be pruned. Limit pruning to clipping broken and crossing branches. Older shrubs do not respond to pruning for rejuvenation.

A number of daphnes have been chosen as **Great Plant Picks** by the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden for their outstanding performance in maritime Northwest gardens.

SPECIES DAPHNES

***Daphne cneorum*, Rock Daphne** Evergreen. Dark green narrow foliage. Rosy pink flowers in late spring. Extremely fragrant. Great rock garden plant—matting to trailing habit, 1' tall X 3' wide. Likes full sun. Hardy to -20°F. **'Ruby Glow'** has particularly vivid rose pink flowers.

***Daphne odora*, Winter Daphne** Evergreen. Deep glossy green foliage. Deep pink flowers with creamy pink throats in late winter. Extremely fragrant. Neat, handsome shrub to 4-6' tall and wide. Likes morning sun or partial shade—does not like hot afternoon sun. Hardy to 10°F. The most popular NW daphne, several cultivars (clones) are available, including:

'Aureo-marginata' Foliage is dark green with yellow or cream edges. **Great Plant Pick.**

'Banana Split' Foliage has narrow green stripe and wide yellow edges; semi-dwarf to 3-4' tall.

'Mae-jima' Foliage has broad creamy leaf margins; semi-dwarf to 3-4' tall.

'Marianni' Foliage is lighter green with yellow leaf margins; semi-dwarf to 3-4' tall.

'Moonlight Parfait' Flowers are pale; foliage has creamy leaf margins; semi-dwarf to 3-4' tall.

'Sweet Amethyst' Foliage is solid light green; purple buds, lavender blooms. Dwarf 2-3'.

'Zuiko Nishiki' Glossy dark foliage and a more upright and rounded habit

Daphne retusa*, AKA *Daphne tangutica Retusa group Evergreen. Dark green foliage. Habit is more dense and rounded than *D. tangutica*. Purple pink flowers with white throat. Very fragrant, but more incense than sweet. Bright red berries in fall. Mounding shrub to 3'.

Daphne tangutica Evergreen. Mid to dark green foliage. Habit is more open and upright than *D. retusa*. Pale pink to white flowers in late spring. Very fragrant, but more incense than sweet. Bright red berries in fall. Mounding shrub to 3'. **Great Plant Pick.**

HYBRID DAPHNES

'Briggs Moonlight' Semi-evergreen. Cream colored leaves edged with green. Light pink flowers in mid spring. Fragrant. Dwarf compact shrub to 3'.

'Carol Mackie' Semi-evergreen. Light green leaves edged with cream. Light pink flowers in mid spring. Fragrant. Compact shrub to 3'. Hardy to -20 °F. **Great Plant Pick.**

'Eternal Fragrance' Evergreen. Glossy deep green foliage. Pale pink to white flowers in early summer, reblooming through fall. Extremely fragrant. 2-3' tall and wide. Hardy to -10 °F. **Great Plant Pick.**

'Jim's Pride' Semi-evergreen. Rich green large leaves. White flowers in late spring with flushes through the summer. Extremely fragrant. Compact shrub to 4'. Hardy to -10 °F. **Great Plant Pick.**

'Lawrence Crocker' Evergreen. Glossy dark green foliage. Lavender flowers from spring to fall. Very fragrant. Dense compact shrub to 12" tall and wide. Hardy to 0°F. **Great Plant Pick.**

'Perfume Princess' Evergreen. Glossy dark green foliage. Pink flowers in late winter; may rebloom. Very fragrant. Hybrid of winter daphne with larger, earlier flowers. Grows 4' tall.

'Summer Ice' Evergreen. Foliage is green edged with white. Pale pink to white flowers in early summer, reblooming through fall. Extremely fragrant. 2-3' tall; 18-24" wide. Hardy to -10 °F. **Great Plant Pick.**