

*Pieris japonica*, sometimes called Andromeda or Lily-of-the-Valley Shrub, is an evergreen shrub related to rhododendrons and heather. It bears small, mildly fragrant, white or pink urn-shaped flowers in showy racemes (sprays) that give the shrub its common name. It provides year-round garden interest, making it a great shrub to anchor a bed or place near an entryway or patio. Smaller varieties go well in large containers. *Pieris* has glossy evergreen foliage, with most varieties sporting new growth in late winter in bright shades of burgundy, bronze, red, or chartreuse. Sprays of bead-like flower buds (usually pink, red, or green) form in late summer and ornament the plant throughout the winter. Then the flower sprays open in late winter to early spring, providing visual interest and food for orchard mason bees and hummingbirds at a time when few other plants are in bloom.

*Pieris* performs well in Puget Sound gardens in full sun to partial shade. It does not like hot afternoon sun. Most varieties grow as mid-size shrubs, typically growing to about five feet high and wide in a decade. *Pieris* likes soil rich in organic matter. Feed in the spring with a good rhododendron fertilizer such as Dr. Earth Rhododendron & Camellia Food or E.B. Stone Azalea, Camellia & Gardenia Food. Keep watered during our summer droughts. Like rhododendrons, *Pieris* are shallow rooted. They resent being planted too deeply or mulched heavily. Pests are rarely a problem; rhododendron root weevils can be controlled with beneficial nematodes if necessary.

A number of *Pieris* varieties have been awarded the (British) Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit, or have been selected as Pacific Northwest Great Plant Picks. These varieties tend to have a particularly fine show of flowers and/or new foliage, and also to perform especially well in maritime garden conditions.

**Brookside Dwarf** Red stems and buds, white flowers. Chartreuse new growth. Columnar form, compact to 3' tall. A Great Plant Pick.

**Brouwer's Beauty** Red stems and buds, white flowers; very floriferous. Dark green foliage; flowers held more horizontally at top of plant. 5' tall. A Great Plant Pick.

**Cavatine Dwarf** Green buds; fragrant white flowers. Red new growth; compact rounded form, 2-3' tall. A Great Plant Pick and RHS selection.

**Dorothy Wycoff** Deep red buds; pale pink to white flowers. Bronze to red new growth. 5' tall.

**Fire and Ice** White flowers contrast with red new growth. Red new growth; older foliage variegated, green edged white. 5' tall.

**Flaming Silver** White flowers. Flame-red new growth; older foliage variegated, green edged white. 4-5' tall. An RHS selection.

**Forest Flame** Pink buds, white flowers in broad, heavy clusters. New growth bright red turning pink, then dark green. 6-10' tall. An RHS selection.

**Katsura** Deep pink buds, lilac pink flowers. Wine-red new growth. 5' tall.

**Little Heath** Pink buds, white flowers. Peach to pink new growth; older foliage variegated, green edged cream. 3-4' tall.

**Mountain Fire** White flowers, profuse. Fiery red new growth turns coppery, then dark green. 6-10' tall. An RHS selection.

**Passion** Cherry red buds and flowers. Reddish-purple new growth. 5-6' tall.

**Passion Frost** Deep red buds; purple-pink flowers. Red-purple new growth; older foliage variegated, green edged yellow. 4-5' tall.

**Passion Pink Frost** White to blush-pink flowers; pink-red buds. Red-purple new growth; older foliage variegated, green edged cream. 4-5' tall.

**Pink Flamingo** Red buds, deep pink and white flowers. Reddish new growth. 4-5' tall.

**Prelude Dwarf** Profuse, pure white flowers. Blooms later than many varieties. Pink new foliage; older foliage very dark green. Compact; 2-3' tall. An RHS selection.

**Scarlet O'Hara** Pink buds, white flowers. Bright red new growth; older foliage stays tipped with red. 6-10' tall.

**Valley Fire** Snowy white flowers, flaming red new growth. 5-7' tall. A Great Plant Pick.

**Valley Rose** Deep pink buds; flowers rose pink with white tips; floriferous. Bronze new growth. 5' tall. A Great Plant Pick.

**Valley Valentine** Dusty red buds, red and white flowers; floriferous. Dark green foliage contrasts nicely with flowers. 5-7' tall. A Great Plant Pick and RHS selection.

**Variegata** Short racemes of ivory white flowers. Pink- coral new growth; older foliage variegated, green edged white. 5-6' tall. A Great Plant Pick.