

THE GOLD MEDAL PLANT PROGRAM

Growing a greener Long Island since 1999

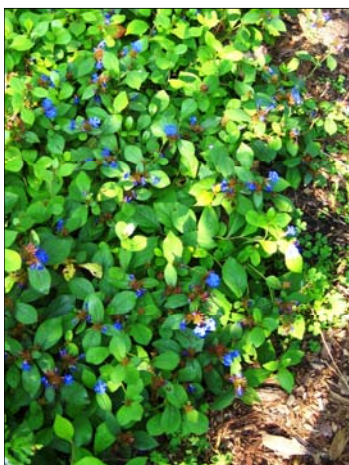


Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
of Suffolk County

Extension Education Center
423 Griffing Ave., Suite 100
Riverhead, NY 11901-3071
Phone: 631-727-7850
Fax: 631-852-3205
E-mail: suffolk@cornell.edu
www.ccesuffolk.org

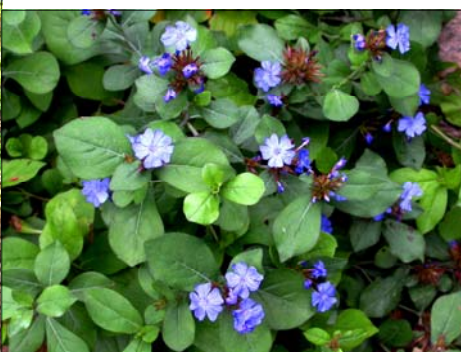
Gold Medal Ground Covers

In a tight spot and don't know what to plant? Try one of these award-winning ground covers! Ground covers are a great way to fill in bare spots and add a unique touch to your landscape, while suppressing weeds. These winning ground covers have desirable foliage and/or flowers and grow admirably in the Long Island garden. Plant one today!



Ceratostigma plumbaginoides - **Plumbago**

Carefree, long-flowering ground cover - Gold Medal Winner 2002

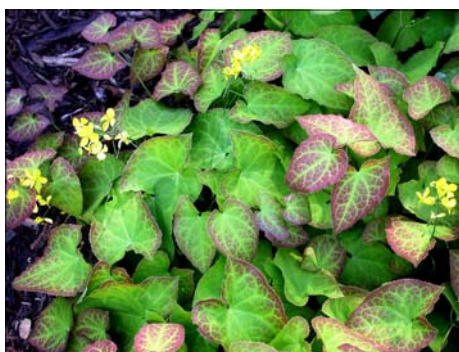


Plumbago or Blue Leadwort is a durable, deciduous ground cover that can be used for edging or at the front of the border. Bright green foliage emerges late and can prevent weed growth. Deep gentian blue flowers appear in August or September. Foliage turns brilliant reddish bronze in late September and persists through November. Cut it back hard at the end of the season. Grow in full or partial sun locations in well-drained soil that is high in organic matter. Because it emerges late, inter-plant with early-flowering bulbs for best results. It grows 8-12" tall with a 12-18" spread. Hardy in zones 5-10.

Epimedium x perralchicum 'Fröhnleiten' - **Fröhnleiten Barrenwort**

Evergreen ground cover for dry shade - Gold Medal Winner 2001

Fröhnleiten Barrenwort is a sturdy, quick establishing, low maintenance ground cover for the shade. It performs best in moist, organic soils, but will also grow admirably in difficult, dry shade locations. For fast coverage, plant 3" pot-sized plants 6-8" apart. Plants spaced 12" apart will fill in more slowly as the plants produce runners. Cut back in the spring. Bright yellow flowers appear soon after, then the fresh green foliage with a red edge resumes growth and remains evergreen throughout the year. Hardy in zones 5-9.



Microbiota decussata - **Russian Arborvitae**

Attractive, evergreen ground cover - Gold Medal Winner 2000

Russian Arborvitae is an evergreen ground cover that makes a unique replacement for junipers. The pleasing green color changes in fall to bronzy-purple. It will perform nicely in moist, well-drained soils to dry conditions in part shade to full sun locations. The prostrate growth will attain a height of about 12-16" and will grow horizontally (8-12" annually) to reach a spread of 12'. Also works nicely in a raised planter where it can weep over the sides. No known pests or diseases bother Russian Arborvitae, unlike other coniferous ground covers which can be plagued by tip blights. Hardy in zones 3-8.



Sarcococca hookeriana var. *humilis* - **Dwarf Sweetbox**
Fragrant, evergreen, woodland ground cover - Gold Medal Winner 2004



Dwarf Sweetbox has attractive, dark evergreen foliage that hides the highly fragrant white flowers which bloom February-March. This woodland ground cover grows to about 24" in height and width, and spreads slowly to form nice drifts. Plant in moist, acidic soils in shaded or partially shaded areas. Dwarf Sweetbox works well with rhododendrons and other acid-loving plants. It is best to mulch new plantings. It is highly pest resistant. Hardy in zones 6-8.

***Waldsteinia ternata* - Siberian Barren-strawberry**
Tough, deer-resistant ground cover - Gold Medal Winner 2005

Siberian Barren-strawberry is a tough, vigorous, mat forming semi-evergreen ground cover. This low growing plant reaches only 4-5" tall and has shiny foliage that resembles a strawberry plant. ½" wide, saucer-shaped, bright yellow flowers appear in late spring through early summer. This plant thrives in humus-rich, acidic soil in partial or full shade. It effectively competes with weeds once established. Works well as a lawn alternative or ground cover in a natural garden and is deer resistant. Hardy in zones 4-7.



Some more great ground covers include:

- *Geranium x cantabrigiense* 'Biokovo' - Hardy Geranium
Low-maintenance, attractive ground cover - Gold Medal Winner 2008
- *Phlox stolonifera* - Creeping Phlox
Flowering ground cover for moist shade - Gold Medal Winner 2009
- *Stachys* 'Helene Von Stein' - Helene Von Stein Lamb's Ears
Silver-leafed, perennial ground cover - Gold Medal Winner 2006

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The Long Island Gold Medal Plant Program began in 1999 and is administered by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County. The purpose of the Gold Medal Program is to identify underutilized plant material of exceptional merit that is particularly suited for growing on Long Island. Increased public education and awareness of sustainable plant selections are the main goals of the program.

Four award-winning plants are selected each year, which may be trees, shrubs, perennials, vines, groundcovers, or grasses. Visit www.ccesuffolk.org to see descriptions of all the award-winning plants. Gold Medal Plant Winners are identified by the Plant Selection Committee, which is a volunteer group of horticulture professionals. If you would like more information, please contact Darrell Trout at: dtrout11@verizon.net

*This publication was created by Alexis Alvey, Nursery & Landscape Specialist
CCE-Suffolk 2009*

*Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County provides equal program and employment opportunities.
Please contact the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County office if you have any special needs.
Cornell Cooperative Extension is funded in part by Suffolk County through the office of Steve Levy, County Executive, and the County Legislature.*