



## Flowering Shrubs: Weigela

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### Hummingbirds Love Weigela

*Weigela* (why-jee-la) is a deciduous broad-leaved, flowering shrub that is long-lived and very easy to grow. Hanging singly or in clusters, its showy funnel shaped blossoms of white to varying shades of pink and red delights the eye. Hummingbirds love this shrub. It blooms in the late spring to early summer. Leaves are elliptic to ovate ranging in colour from plain green to shades of purple to gold. Variegated varieties are also available. Height ranges from approximately 30 cm to 3M.

Named after German botanist Christian Ehrenfried Weigel (1748-1831), *Weigela* is a genus of about 12 species of deciduous shrubs from East Asia. *Weigela florida* is perhaps the most important. Introduced to the west in 1844 by Robert Fortune this shrub, native to east Asia, became a staple of the Victorian garden. Once described as a one season plant due to the flowers being its only ornamental value, Dutch and Canadian breeders after WW II focused on developing compact forms, and colourful foliage to extend its ornamental value beyond the one season. *Weigela* enthusiasts continue to produce cultivars that have more exciting colours of foliage beyond plain green.

### Varieties to Plant

*Weigela florida* can be used in a variety of ways in the landscape; as a border, foundation, hedge, specimen or container plant. Many cultivars have been produced for size, flower and foliage colour variations. Most have a dense round form with arching branches however upright varieties do exist. A few of the many varieties are listed below. 'Alexandra' (Wine and Roses®) 1.25 - 1.5 M tall, ruby red flowers and burgundy leaves, hardiness zone 4, slow growth 'Variegata' 2 M tall, deep pink flowers, green leaves with creamy white margins, hardiness zone 5b, medium growth rate 'Minuet' .6 M tall, ruby red flowers with yellow throats, leaves green tinged purple leaves, slight fragrance, hardiness zone 3a, medium growth rate 'Ghost' 1.2-1.6 M tall, early golden foliage changes to butter-cream later in the season and finishes almost greenish white in the fall. Zone 4a, medium growth rate.

### Preferred Conditions

Full sun and moist, well-drained soil are the preferred conditions to ensure optimum growth and flowering however this shrub will grow in light partial shade and many types of soil. It is also pollution tolerant.

### Care and Pruning

Pruning this plant follows pruning's general rule of thumb which is to prune spring flowering shrubs soon after flowering. Flowers develop on old wood so pruning later in the year will decrease next spring's blossoms. Only prune up to 1/3 of the oldest wood and remove damaged or diseased branches. If left unpruned, deadwood often develops. This should be removed as soon as it is noticed. Pruning will keep this plant healthy, tidy and in shape. This plant will also benefit from adding organic compost or a balanced fertilizer (15-30-15) to the soil as it produces many flowers. Mulching is also beneficial for keeping the soil moist.

### Problems you Might Encounter

*Weigela* have no serious pests or diseases.

Learn more about *Weigela* [here](#)>