

Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale

Cornus alternifolia

COMMON NAME: Pagoda Dogwood, Alternate-leaved Dogwood

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Cornus alternifolia* (*cornus* from Latin for “horn” in reference to the hardness of the wood; alternate leaved)

FLOWER COLOR: creamy white

BLOOMING PERIOD: Late May, early June

SIZE: Large shrub or small tree up to 15 or 20 feet tall. The branches spread horizontally.

BEHAVIOR: Non-invasive, moderate to rapid growth rate. Often self sows.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Rich to moderately dry soil, slightly acid and well drained. Tolerant of considerable shade, but flowers and sets fruit better in some sun.

NATURAL RANGE: Southeastern Canada west to Minnesota, south to northern Georgia and west to Missouri. Found throughout Wisconsin.

SPECIAL FEATURES: Very attractive texture and form, especially when in flower. The flowers are very fragrant and form clusters at the ends of branches. The flowers are followed by berries that gradually change from green to red to blue-black on red stalks. The berries are a valuable food for birds and other wildlife. The leaves can turn to a beautiful reddish-purple in autumn with the color varying from tree to tree.

SUGGESTED CARE: Water well during the first growing season and protect from rabbits while small.

COMPANION PLANTS: Sugar maple, jack-in-the-pulpit, white ash, sweet cicely, Virginia creeper, bloodroot, Solomon’s plume, and large-flowered bellwort.