



Henderson County Master Gardeners Weekly News Article March 20, 2017

Coral Honeysuckle by Lydia Holley

Are you wanting to attract hummingbirds to your garden? Then you may want to plant a coral honeysuckle vine (*Lonicera sempervirens*).

This vine stands out as a beacon, drawing hummingbirds to its bright blooms and sweet nectar as they make their migration in the spring. Coral honeysuckle will often bloom early in the spring, bringing joy to the gardener that is weary of winter.



Coral honeysuckle is a native to Texas, and most of the eastern United States. Its native range extends from as far south as Florida, and as far north as Illinois. Since it has such a large native range, you may not be surprised to know that coral honeysuckle is not picky about the soil it grows in. It will grow in sand or clay, and will grow in acidic to mildly alkaline soils. It even grows in part shade.

Coral honeysuckle's blooms seem to glow due to the vibrant red coloring outside, and its golden yellow inside. The blooms are not the only wonderful quality to this vine, however. It shows off red berries in the fall, and several types of birds find the berries appetizing. It is also the host plant to the Spring Azure butterfly and the Snowberry Clearwing moth. Not interested in having a red blooming vine in your garden? There is also a yellow blooming cultivar available.

Although it depends upon our winter temperatures, it will mostly likely remain evergreen in East Texas, growing to around 20 feet tall.

Coral honeysuckle has been designated as Plant of the Month for March at the HCMGA Dream Garden located inside the East Texas Arboretum. Stop by to see the garden and to notice coral honeysuckle's brilliant blooms. You may even find a hummingbird or two sipping its sweet nectar.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email hendersonCMGA@gmail.com or visit www.henderson-co-tx-mg.org.