Introduction

This 4- to 6-feet tall shrub covers itself with soft, white flowers each spring before leaves emerge (Fig. 1). It appears to be covered with snow when in full bloom. Bright red, orange or yellow fall color bring the shrub back to life before leaves fall to the ground.

General Information

Scientific name: *Fothergilla gardenii*

Pronunciation: faw-thur-GIL-luh gar-DEE-nee-eye

Common name(s): Dwarf Fothergilla

Family: *Hamamelidaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 5 through 8A (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Figure 1. Dwarf Fothergilla.

Origin: native to North America

Uses: accent; border; mass planting

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant
Fothergilla gardenii Dwarf Fothergilla

Description

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Height: 4 to 6 feet
Spread: 4 to 6 feet
Plant habit: round
Plant density: dense
Growth rate: slow
Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: dentate
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval); obovate; orbiculate
Leaf venation: pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: red; yellow
Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: white
Flower characteristic: pleasant fragrance; spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: irregular
Fruit length: less than .5 inch
Fruit cover: dry or hard
Fruit color: black
Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

Archival copy: for current recommendations see http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu or your local extension office.
Current year stem/twig color: brown
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: acidic; loam; clay; sand;

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: native plant that often reproduces into nearby landscapes

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

The moderately small size makes this appropriate for planting in a residential landscape. It can be used in a shrub border to spice up the yard in spring and fall. Plant it near the corner of a large commercial building and leave it unpruned to allow the natural rounded form to emerge. It is also suited for planting along the foundation of the house provided the soil drains well. Clipping the plant can reduce flowering so locate it where it can grow to its natural size

Fothergilla can be grown in any soil except those that are excessively drained. Plants suffer in extended drought, especially in full sun. An acidic clayey soil that holds moisture and drains well is ideal.

There are 5 or more cultivars listed with various growth habits, foliage patterns and fall color.