**Syringa vulgaris** - Common Lilac (*Oleaceae*)

*Syringa vulgaris* is a common midwestern shrub with showy and highly fragrant May inflorescences. Common Lilac suffers from susceptibility to powdery mildew on the leaves by autumn that detract from its overall appeal.

**FEATURES**

**Form**
- medium to large shrub
- to 10' tall x 10' wide
- vase shaped to upright oval, becoming spreading with age
- medium rate

**Culture**
- full sun to partial shade
- adaptable to various soils and moderately stressful conditions
- needs a well-drained site

- moderate availability; B&B or container; much of the mainstream industry is growing species and hybrids that are less susceptible to powdery mildew

**Foliage**
- dark green
- deciduous
- opposite
- narrow ovate to lanceolate
- glabrous, entire, and shiny
- often infested with powdery mildew by autumn
- autumn color green to yellowish green

**Flowers**
- most are purple, but white and pink-violet forms exist
- 6" erect to pendulous showy inflorescences, often arising in pairs from the terminal buds
- mostly single-flowering forms
- extremely fragrant

**Fruits**
- winter persistent brown capsules on a fruiting stalk
- not ornamental

**Twigs**
- light brown to brown-gray
- lightly lenticeled
- buds moderately sized and tan

**Trunk**
- multi-stemmed or multi-trunked
- light brown and slightly furrowed

**USAGE**

**Function**
- border, entranceway, or specimen shrub
- in rows or groups where ample space is provided

**Texture**
- medium in foliage and when bare

**Assets**
- showy fragrant flowers in mid-May
- cold hardiness

**Liabilities**
- foliage infested with powdery mildew in late summer and autumn
- poor autumn color; becoming large and spreading with age
- suckering habit
- insect prone

**Habitat**
- Zones 3 to 5, depending on source
- Native to Southern Europe

**SELECTIONS**

**Alternates**
- shrubs with showy mid-spring inflorescences
- shrubs with very fragrant flowers (e.g. *Viburnum carlesii*)

**Variants**
- bred and selected primarily for variation in floral color; there are both single- and double-flowered forms; over 1000 cultivars have been described! Some examples of cultivars (some are probably hybrids of some kind or another)
- Single flower types:
  - 'Massena' - deep reddish purple flowers
  - 'Maud Notcutt' - pure white flowers
  - 'Sensation' - purplish red florets with white margins
- Double flower types:
  - 'Mrs. Edward Harding' - red purple flowers, borne late
  - 'Mme. Lemoine'- flowers start creamy yellow and turn white
  - 'Président Grévy' - lilac-blue flowers