Potentilla fruticosa represents a group of dwarf shrubs with exceptional flowering habits that is available in a wide range of colors and that flowers for long periods of time. Potentilla has small flowers but produces them from early summer to autumn. Potentilla grows best in full sun and any but a heavy soil. It is a low, mound-like plant with good drought resistance and freedom from serious pest problems. The foliage is usually bluish-green. Rejuvenate this plant with severe pruning every 2-3 yrs.

FEATURES

Form
-small deciduous shrub
-2-4' high x similar spread
-low, rounded form
-often irregular

Culture
-full sun to partial shade
-tolerates most well-drained soils, from slightly acidic to slightly alkaline
-easy to transplant and culture
-adaptable and urban tolerant
-generally pest and disease free
-widely available

Foliage
-alternate arrangement
-pinnately compound leaves
-usually 5 leaflets (1/2-1" long and half as wide)
-leaflets narrow elliptic with pointed apex
-entire margin
-no petiole (sessile)
-dark green
-autumn color greenish yellow, not effective

Flowers
-single to double, depending on the cultivar
-rounded, with 5 petals
-1" or wider in diameter
-white, yellow, red (depending on the cultivar)
-long flowering period starting in June and often until frost

Fruits
-brown, hairy achene
-not ornamental

Twigs
-fine strips of peeling bark with age
-plants very twiggy

Trunk
-not applicable

USAGE

Function
-excellent in borders or rock gardens
-massing low hedge

Texture
-fine texture when bare
-very dense

Assets
-long flowering period, abundant display of flowers
-tolerant of heat, humidity, drought, and average or poor soils

Liabilities
-can become scraggly unless properly pruned

Habitat
-Zones 4 to 7
-found throughout the Northern Hemisphere

SELECTIONS

Alternates
-low, deciduous shrubs (Berberis thunbergii, Chaenomeles japonica, Philadelphus sp., Spiraea sp., etc.)

Cultivars – Variants – Related species
Dozens of cultivars exist, differing in flower color and form:
-'Abbotswood' - prolific, long-lasting white flowers on a 2’ tall mound
-'Coronation Triumph' - One of the earliest to bloom. The flowers are bright yellow.
-'Dakota Sunrise' - Bright yellow flowers and a somewhat more prostrate growth habit.
-'Daydawn' - The flowers are pink and white.
-'Floppy Disc' - Double pink flowers are combined with a low, spreading habit.
-'Gold Drop' - lemon yellow flowers on a rounded, compact plant with fine, fan-like foliage.
-'Goldfinger' - golden yellow flowers on compact hardy plant. Flowers all summer.
-'McKay's White' - Creamy white flowers.
-'Orangeade' - Orange flowers that fade in the sun.
-'Primrose Beauty' - Pale yellow flowers are combined with silvery gray foliage.
-'Red Ace' - Flowers red when the plant is grown in partial shade and during cold weather. They become orange during the summer.
-'Red Robin' - Red flowers that fade only slightly.
-'Sundance' - Double, yellow flowers.
-'Sunset' - Orange flowers during cooler weather become yellow in summer.
-'Yellow Gem' - The yellow flowers have ruffled petals.