

# *Fothergilla gardenii* Dwarf Fothergilla<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

This 4- to 6-foot-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.

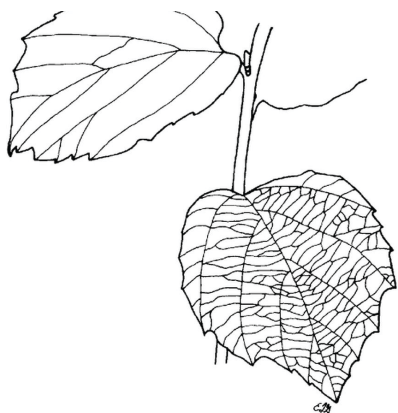


Figure 1. Dwarf fothergilla.

## 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

**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



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**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

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**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

**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. *Fothergilla major* and *Fothergilla monticola* are larger plants.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are usually serious enough to be damaging.