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Contributed by Janet Mackey

A NATIVE SHRUB with an EXPLOSION of AUTUMN COLOR

Hearts-a-Bustin' (*Euonymus americanus*) stars in the autumn garden. This native shrub is interesting year-round, but it puts on a real show in the fall when its bright red bumpy seed capsules split open to reveal glowing orange berries. This is the most striking fruit display I know of!

One of this shrub's greatest attributes is that it grows in shade ... even *dry* shade. Unfortunately though, the deer love it! I have one growing at the edge of the woods, but it has been pruned by the deer, leaving only a couple of bare stems from the ground to about 4'. It does bush out above the deer-pruned height, though, and produces a nice display in the autumn. These shrubs can spread to form a thicket, but that isn't likely if they share space with deer.



The shrub itself has a nice upright form. The stems are green all year, so they are attractive in the winter, even without leaves or those marvelous seed capsules. Most information sources say it will reach 4-6 feet tall, but the clump I'm growing next to the house tops 7',

and that is with an occasional trim. There are beautiful thickets of Hearts-a-Bustin' at the National Arboretum, and many there are taller than 6'.

Consider Hearts-a-Bustin' if you'd like to add an unusual splash of autumn to your garden.