

By Clara A. Curtis

'Abelia KALEIDOSCOPE'

Abelia, or glossy abelia, may be on your list of plants too common for your garden. But have you taken a closer look at the many variegated foliage cultivars, including *Abelia* 'Kaleidoscope' or the variously named 'Anniversary' cultivars? These tough and heat-tolerant shrubs deserve a second glance.

Abelia 'Kaleidoscope' provides a rainbow of foliage colors including autumnal red, orange, yellow and green. The glossy and fine-textured foliage lends itself to shearing if needed to maintain its shape, but the shrub grows neatly, needing only a small pruning snip here and there to maintain a loose, yet tidy, shape.

Butterflies are attracted to the flowers, which emerge white and fade to a shell pink as they persist into autumn. Tiny snips of foliage make perfect greenery additions for small floral arrangements. Abelia is easy to establish in well-drained soils and is tolerant of heat and drought. This shrub can be used to great effect in fall container gardens paired with your favorite fall-flowering chrysanthemums, bulbs, kale or pansies. In late fall transplant *Abelia* 'Kaleidoscope' from a container to a bed location.

**Quick
Facts &
Keys to
Success**

Common Name: Kaleidoscope abelia, glossy abelia.

Botanical name: *Abelia x grandiflora* 'Kaleidoscope'
PP 16988.

Family: Caprifoliaceae.

Cultivars: 'Little Richard', 'Silver Anniversary', 'Gold Anniversary', 'Bronze Anniversary', 'Ruby Anniversary'.

Blooming Period: Summer into fall.
Flowers persist for many months.

Type: Flowering shrub.

Size: 2 to 4 feet in height with equal spread.

Exposure: Sun to part shade.

Hardiness: Zones 6 to 9.

When to plant: Spring or fall.

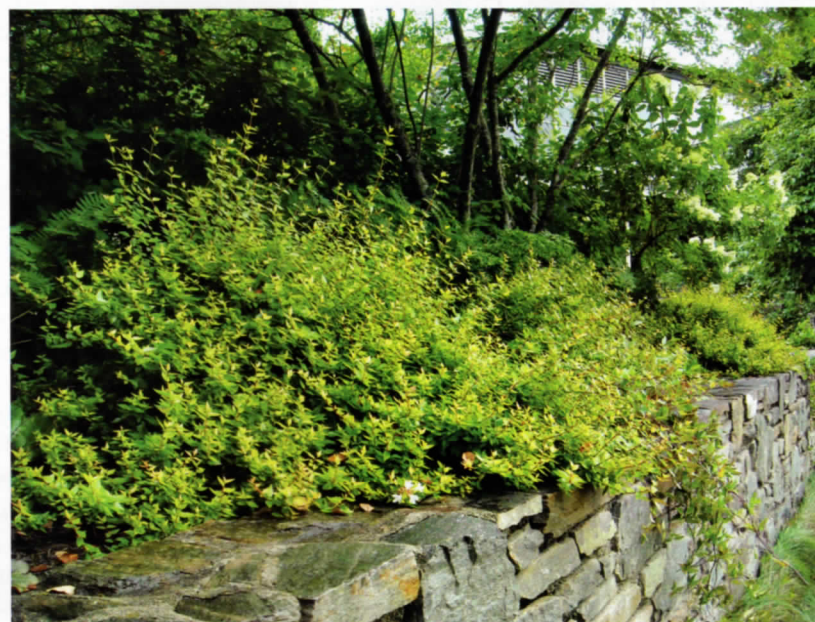
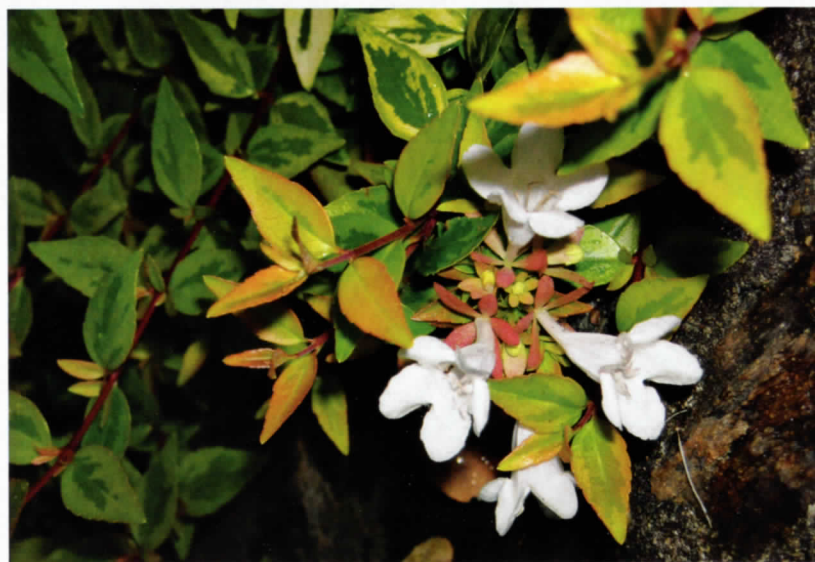
Soil: Well-drained garden soils.

Watering: Water well each week to establish in the first year.

When to Fertilize: Fertilize in the first year to establish.

In your Landscape: Chosen as a colorful accent plant and for sweet-smelling flowers, abelia works well in flowerbeds and containers. It is also deer resistant.

Clara A. Curtis is the director of design at the North Carolina Arboretum, and gardens at her home in Haywood County.



Photos courtesy of Clara A. Curtis.