China is home to more than 30,000 plant species – one-eighth of the world’s total. At Lan Su, visitors can enjoy hundreds of these plants, many of which have a rich symbolic and cultural history in China. This guide is a selected look at some of Lan Su’s current favorites.
A master species list is available at the entrance. It is also available online at www.lansugarden.org/plants
**Camellia**  
(*Camellia ‘Winter’s Rose’*)
Bred by the U.S. National Arboretum for winter hardiness, this evergreen is compact and slow growing to a height of two feet. Shell-pink flowers are miniature, rose-form doubles.

**Weeping Katsura**  
(*Cercidiphyllum japonicum f. pendulum*)
This deciduous small tree has weeping branches of heart-shaped leaves. Come fall, its leaves turn an orange-brown and smell like burnt sugar.

**Loquat**  
(*Eriobotrya japonica*)
This rose-family tree is native to south-central China. It has large, serrated deep green leaves and flowers late in the fall. In mild winters, it may produce a small yellow edible fruit.

**Begonia**  
(*Begonia grandis ssp. evansiana*)
Along with pendulant, rose-pink flowers, this plant has prominent red veins on the undersides of its leaves. Native to China, it has been admired by poets and painters since the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 CE) as a symbol of feminine modesty, beauty and virtue.

**Crape Myrtle**  
(*Lagerstroemia ‘Natchez’ & ‘Tuscarora’*)
This Chinese native was a favorite ornamental tree during the Tang dynasty (618-906 CE), when it was a common sight on palace grounds. Look up high for its dense clusters of crinkled blooms and below for its mottled, peeling bark.

**Osmanthus**  
(*multiple species; see master species list*)
Osmanthus are evergreen trees or shrubs with tiny intensely fragrant flowers. Their common name is “sweet olive” due to their sweet fragrance and fruits which resemble olives (though toxic). Lan Su’s collection includes several species and cultivars with different habits, leaf shapes, and flower colors (white, yellow, or orange).

**Rose**  
(*Rosa ‘Sevillana’*)
While not native to China, *Rosa ‘Sevillana’* with its bright red blooms was selected by the original designer as a nod to Portland’s own namesake—“The City of Roses.” Once the blooms are spent, large rose hips will form on this florabunda rose.

**Shore Pine**  
(*Pinus contorta ssp. contorta*)
This species is native to the Oregon coast. Pines are an important design element of a Chinese garden and a traditional symbol of strength. Each of the garden’s shore pines has different growth habits typical of the species and years of pruning.
CRIMSON GLORY VINE  
*(Vitis coignetiae)*  
This deciduous vine is a type of grape which turns into beautiful shades of hot red and crimson-purple in fall. In gardens, its long trailing habit is appreciated as a symbol of continuity.

SEVEN SONS FLOWER  
*(Heptacodium miconoides)*  
Native to China, this late summer bloomer has fragrant white flowers followed by rose-pink calyces. This multi-stemmed shrub has a fountain shape and interesting, exfoliating bark.

STRAWBERRY BEGONIA  
*(Saxifraga stolonifera)*  
Despite its common name, this plant is neither a strawberry nor a begonia! It is a saxifrage. Its furry grey-green leaves resemble a begonia and its habit of spreading by stolons (i.e. runners) is reminiscent of strawberries. These will form a beautiful groundcover in part sun.

CRABAPPLE  
*(Malus ‘Prairiefire’, Malus ‘Sugar Tyme’)*  
Crabapples have fragrant flowers in the spring and plentiful edible fruits summer thru winter. ‘Sugar Tyme’ has white flowers and bright green leaves and fruits, while ‘Prairiefire’ has pink flowers and dark green leaves and burgundy fruits.

CITRUS  
*(Citrus ichangensis, Citrus trifoliata ‘Flying Dragon’ [Formerly Poncirus trifoliata]*)  
Citrus ichangensis and Citrus trifoliata are both native to China and in the Rutaceae (citrus) family. The Poncirus trifoliata ‘Flying Dragon’ is a dwarf cultivar with highly contorted stems and long sharp spines. Fruits are edible though extremely sour.

LACEBARK PINE  
*(Pinus bungeana)*  
Native to China, mature specimens of this species are rarely found in the United States. It often grows as a multi trunk tree. Its needles are bundles of three. Its most outstanding ornamental quality is its multi-colored bark that naturally flakes off in a lace-like pattern. By fall the old layer of bark has peeled off, revealing new colors and patterns.

PERSIMMON  
*(Diospyros kaki ‘Hachiya’)*  
Cultivated for more than 2,000 years in China, this ebony-wood family member grows to 20 feet tall and is hardy to 10° F. Its fruit turns a bright orange as the leaves begin to drop. The highly tannic fruit can only be eaten after it ripens to a mushy softness.

LILY TURF  
*(Liriope muscari, Liriope m ‘Lilac Beauty’ Liriope spicata, Liriope S. ‘Silver Dragon’)*  
Used extensively in Chinese gardens and in city plantings throughout the Yangtze river delta region of China, this ornamental grass is lush and no-fuss. You’ll see its pretty blooms above the blades which is a tell-tale sign that this plant is not a true grass, but a good lookalike.

Do you have a question about a specific plant? Email Lan Su’s Horticulture department at horticulture@lansugarden.org for more information.