

Key to Garden Taxa of Halesia (Hatch 1989)

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Note all taxonomists recognize the number of botanical taxa covered here and tend to lump a large amount of variation into three or sometimes two species. I believe there is merit in splitting out infraspecific taxa and one always has the opportunity to reject them and go with a simpler, species name.

1. leaves oval to obovate; fruit 2-winged; petals fused.....2

1. leaves elliptic to obovate; fruit 4-winged; petals appearing in part to be separate.....5

2. flowers often > 2.5-3.0 cm.....*Halesia diptera* var. *magniflora*

2. flowers mostly < 2.5 cm*Halesia diptera* var. *diptera*

5. small tree or shrub with 5+ trunks; lamina < 12 cm long; corolla mostly 7-12mm long; stamens exerted.....6

5. tall tree with 1-3 trunks; lamina often > 12 cm long; corolla 12-30mm long; stamens usually included.....13

6. corolla shallowly lobed.....7

6. corolla divided to the base*Halesia carolina* f. *dialypetala*

7. leaves thick & coarsely wrinkled & corolla very cup-shaped.....*Halesia carolina* 'Meehanii'

7. leaves thin & lightly wrinkled & corolla bell-shaped.....9

9. leaves with dense soft hairs below.....*Halesia carolina* var. *mollis*

9. leaves glabrous or sparsely hairy below.....*Halesia carolina* var. *carolina* (species typical)

13. corolla white.....16

13. corolla pink to white tinted pink.....*Halesia monticola* var. *vestita* f. *rosea* 'Rosea' (Meehan Nursery) and 'Arnold Pink'

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16. leaves densely white pubescent below.....Halesia monticola var. vestita
16. leaves glabrous except when young or green pubescent.....17

NOTE: Var. vestita is sometimes placed with H. carolina var. mollis (yet differing in the corolla size and stamen inclusion (see 17. below) or treated as a cultivar 'Vestita' by Richard Darke.

17. Shrub to small tree of 4-10m; corolla 7-12mm long; stamens shallowly included or exerted.....Halesia carolina var. carolina (C. monticola var. carolina f. carolina)

17. Tree of 10-20m; corolla 12-30mm long; stamens deeply included.....Halesia monticola var. monticola (C. carolina var. monticola, C. tetraptera var. monticola, C. tetraptera var. tetraptera in part)

NOTE: The name H. tetraptera var. tetraptera is used for a shorter version of H. monticola with the larger corolla than H. carolina and deeply included stamens. Some consider it also to have a smaller corolla by the range overlaps in the wild and gardens. The var. tetraptera is not from mountainous regions but intergrades to those populations. In fact, H. carolina, H. diptera, and H. monticola (H. tetraptera) all inhabit many of the same regions in the southeastern US. It becomes a matter of opinion if the taller, mountain taxon (monticola) is simply a product of a different environment and isolation than the smaller, shrubbier forms of the dry hillsides and warm woodlands or a distinct taxon. In all cases, H. carolina should not be confused with either of these taxa if only on the basis of the stamens and corolla length. I prefer to consider them one species as the height and corolla size differences are not evident in cultivation nor can one key to them from most wild material I have seen. Popular articles which claim H. tetraptera is a rename of H. carolina are wrong though H. carolina has long been used in the trade for almost any plant that is not H. diptera. Some authors include all the material under H. tetraptera (with no varieties split) and I prefer the more traditional theory of including them all under H. monticola.
