



Porcelain vine

beautiful it is today in early winter with the heads in beige. When you are not distracted by the colour, you can really see the intricate layering of the individual florets. I think that I will purchase another one or two for other parts of the garden next year. There is a newer form, a nice dwarf called 'Little Lamb' that will do just fine by the garage.

In the very dry part of the garden I want to show you some North American native plants that are uncommonly beautiful at the end of the season. First are the seed panicles of *Amorpha fruticosa*, a very nice shrub in the pea family. This plant, which grows to about eight feet in my garden and has interesting orange anthered, purple-blue flowers in the summer, is very dear to my heart.

Fifteen years ago I took a course on starting tree seeds from Henry Kock at the University of Guelph Arboretum. After spending many hours teaching us the ins and outs of tree propagation, this incredibly knowledgeable and gentle man took us for a seed-collecting stroll. It was on this walk that I first encountered the *amorpha* which had flowers and seed at the same time. I bagged a few. No, not stole, literally bagged in a brown paper bag. All this time later,

particularly in the early winter, I look at the shrub, covered with seeds and think of Henry who passed away a few years ago.

But I digress.

The next beauty is the seed pod of a native milkweed, (*Asclepias syriaca*). Despite the fact that *syriaca* means from Syria, the plant is native here and is common in Southern Europe due to explorers taking it from North America to Europe. Often, this plant is found on noxious weed lists as the sap from the plant is thought to be like its cousins' and poisonous to livestock.

However, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Publication 505 says, "Other species of milkweed



PG Hydrangea



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