

Forsythia shrubs in the parks of Timisoara

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Abstract *Forsythia* is one of the most beautiful shrub species that can be found in the parks and green spaces of the town of Timisoara. *Forsythia* shrubs were present in Timisoara at least since the XIX'th century, and there are still beautiful plants belonging to these species today. The species is considered valuable, and in small numbers it exists in parks, lanes, streets, yards. You can find *Forsythia* shrubs in many parts of the town. They attract the attention especially in the spring, as yellow spots in the town. The present study tries to locate the most important regions where the species can be found, in central parts of the town in main urban green areas.

Key words

Park, Shrubs, *Forsythia*, Timisoara,

Forsythia Vahl. genus

Since their introduction to Western gardens from China and Japan in the nineteenth century, the 7 species of *forsythia* have been popular shrubs valued for their brilliant yellow or gold blossoms in mid-spring. They make excellent cut flowers. Deciduous or sometimes semi-evergreen and of medium stature, they have soft-wooded stems branching from near the ground. The rather narrow, bluntly toothed leaves appear after the 4-petaled flowers, which are paired or clustered at the twig nodes.

Cultivation: Fully frost hardy, they are not fussy about soil type but fertilizer and compost encourage growth. They prefer a sunny position, but climate is crucial: they seldom flower in warm climates requiring winter temperatures well below freezing point. Prune only to remove older branches. Propagate from cuttings in early summer.

Forsythia x intermedia Zbl.

An arching or spreading deciduous shrub with dark green, lance-shaped leaves, this species grows 2,4 -3m tall and slightly wider. A hybrid between *Forsythia suspensa* (Thumb val.) and *Forsythia viridissima* Lindl., it was first recorded in Germany in about 1885. Some fine cultivars include 'Linwood' and 'Spectabilis'. In 1939 Karl Sax at the Arnold Arboretum in Massachusetts created the first artificial tetraploid 'Arnold Giant', and subsequently bred 'Beatrix Farrand' and 'Karl Sax', all carrying large, brilliant gold flowers.

Justitie Park (Park of Justice) is situated in center of Timisoara, near the town hall, in an area surrounded by large boulevards and on one part by the river Bega. The park has nice old trees of different species, while the grassy areas are smaller in size. There are some monuments too. The total surface of the *Forsythia* shrub crown is 0,5m². There is only 1 individual

belonging to this species in the park. The age of the shrub is between 10 and 20 years. Their height is 2,5m. The diameter of the shrub crown is 2m². The shrub is situated in the neighbourhood of Artists Union building.

Copiilor (Childrens) Park is situated in Timisoara on the bank of the river Bega near the center of the town. It has nice old trees of different species and used to have playgrounds for children. There are 9 *Forsythia* shrubs in the park, aged between 10 and 20 years. The height of the shrubs is between 1 and 1,5m. The total surface of the shrub crowns is 46 m². The diameter of the crowns is 2m. The *Forsythia* shrubs are not very old, and are valuable and are located in different parts of the green space, especially near Bul. Michelangelo.

Centrul Civic (Civic Center) Park, is situated in the center of Timisoara, behind Bega Store House. The green space appeared forty years ago, when the region was rebuilt after the demolition of an old building. There are 7 *Forsythia x intermedia* shrubs in the park. The shrubs are 10 to 20 years old, 2 to 3 m high. The total surface of the crowns is 29 m². The diameter of the shrub crowns is between 2 and 2,5m. The shrubs were planted all over the green space. When the park was created 40 years ago the tree species were mixed equally in the whole area. Civic Center Park is rather a transit area than a place where people come to walk in their free time.

Alpinet Park is situated on the banks of the river Bega. It is a nice park with a great variety of species nicely disposed along the river bank. There are 2 *Forsythia x intermedia* shrubs in the park. The total surface of the shrub crowns is 10m². The shrubs are aged between 10 and 20 years. The height of the shrubs is 3- to 4m. The diameter of the shrub crowns is between 2 and 2,5m. The shrubs are situated near center of the green space.

Central Park, (Parcul central) is probably the oldest park in Timisoara, with a history of 150 years. It is situated in the center of the town near the orthodox cathedral. Its central part is geometrical and monumental, while the rest is more natural. There are statues, flower beds, fountains and pergolas in the park. 12 *Forsythia x intermedia* shrubs exist in the park. The total surface of the shrub crowns is 33m². The shrubs are aged between 10 and 20 years. The height of the shrubs is 2 to 3m. The diameter of the tree crowns is between 2 and 2,5m. The shrubs are situated mainly near Bul. 1 Decembrie, which is bordering the park.

Forsythia shrubs can be found in many parts of the town, on the side of lanes, in parks, in alleys, being among the common species. *Forsythia* shrubs represent a great ecological and especially esthetic value wherever they are located, and can be distinguished easily from the mass of other shrubs in spring when they flower. These shrubs are between the most decorative in Timisoara, and are more common in central and well to do areas of the town. Still they can be seen rarely in poorer areas and in the outskirts. *Forsythia* shrubs might have problems in adapting to certain areas, but the present study shows that they are present in smaller or greater number in various points of the town, and well adapted.

Results and Discussions

Forsythia is a valuable species, present in many green spaces of Timisoara. The individuals are often conspicuous and contribute a lot to the outlook of certain urban areas in the spring mainly. There are shrubs which are older, but generally are replaced while others younger at intervals of time. Generally the

most beautiful shrubs are the older ones. *Forsythia x intermedia* shrubs are present in all important parks of Timisoara. Their numbers and importance are much variable. The individuals are sometimes concentrated near building or streets, where have been planted years ago with esthetic purpose. Their numbers vary very much from one green space to another. Analyzing the studied green spaces we can conclude that *Forsythia x intermedia* shrubs are present in all green space, with number of individuals varying between 1 to 2 – and 10- to 12.

Conclusions

1. *Forsythia intermedia* shrubs are present in many parks of Timisoara. The individuals are sometimes very valuable and nice in the spring when they flower.
2. The shrubs have sometimes ages up to 20-25 years and according features. They represent a great ecologic and esthetic value.

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Forsythia x intermedia

