

# *2013 Perennial Plant of the Year™*

## *Polygonatum odoratum* ‘Variegatum’

### Common Names

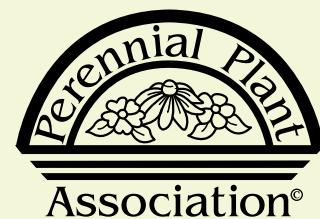
Variegated Solomon’s Seal  
Striped Solomon’s Seal  
Fragrant Solomon’s Seal  
Variegated Fragrant Solomon’s Seal

### Hardiness

USDA Zones 3 to 8

### Light

Part to full shade



**Soil** – This Solomon’s Seal prefers moist, well-drained soil.

**Unique Qualities** – Solomon’s Seal has arching stems that carry pairs of small, bell-shaped, white flowers in mid to late spring. The variegated ovate leaves are soft green with white tips and margins. Fall leaf color is yellow.

**Uses** – This perennial offers vivid highlights in shaded areas of borders, woodland gardens, or naturalized areas. The variegated foliage is attractive in flower arrangements.

# *Polygonatum odoratum* ‘Variegatum’

## 2013 Perennial Plant of the Year™

*Polygonatum odoratum* ‘Variegatum’ is the Perennial Plant Association’s 2013 Perennial Plant of the Year™.

*Polygonatum odoratum*, pronounced po-lig-o-nay’tum o-do-ray’tum vair-e-ah-gay’tum, carries the common names of variegated Solomon’s Seal, striped Solomon’s Seal, fragrant Solomon’s Seal and variegated fragrant Solomon’s Seal. This all-season perennial has greenish-white flowers in late spring and variegated foliage throughout the growing season. The foliage turns yellow in the fall and grows well in moist soil in partial to full shade.

The genus *Polygonatum*, native to Europe and Asia, is a member of the Asparagaceae family. It was formerly found in the family Liliaceae. Regardless of its new location, members of *Polygonatum* are excellent perennials for the landscape. The genus botanical name (*Polygonatum*) comes from poly (many) and gonu (knee joints) and refers to the many-jointed rhizome from which the leaves arise. The common name Solomon’s Seal has several proposed derivations. The first is that the scar that remains on the rootstock after the leaf stalks die off in the fall resembles the seal impressed on wax on documents in the past. The second source is that John Gerard, the English plantsman, suggested that the powdered roots were an excellent remedy for broken bones. He also felt that the plant had the capacity for healing wounds, which was why the perennial received the common name – Solomon’s Seal.

*Polygonatum odoratum* ‘Variegatum’ grows 18 to 24 inches tall and will spread by rhizomes to form colonies. The oval-shaped leaves are carried on upright, arching, and unbranched stems. The variegated leaves are a light green with white tips and margins. Leaves turn an attractive



yellow in the autumn. Sweetly fragrant, small, bell-shaped white flowers with green tips, are borne on short pedicels from the leaf axils underneath the arching stems. Bluish-black berries are sometimes present in the autumn.



Variegated Solomon’s Seal is a classic beauty for the shady woodland garden or the part-shade to full-shade border. It is a great companion plant to other shade lovers including hostas, ferns, and astilbes. The sweet fragrance will enhance that walk along a pathway on a spring morning. Flower arrangers will find the variegated foliage to be an attribute for spring floral arrangements. And finally, this all-season perennial offers yellow fall foliage color.



There are no serious insect or disease problems with variegated Solomon’s Seal. Plants may be divided in the spring or fall. The white rhizomes should be planted just below the soil surface. *Polygonatum odoratum* ‘Variegatum’ is a very easy perennial to grow and will enhance any shade garden, especially a more natural one.