

Gardening in the shade...Pros & Cons

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Shaded areas have always been given a bad rap, considering some of the adverse conditions they propose to may perennial plants and shrubs, however there are numerous plants that thrive under such conditions, for example Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Solomon Seal, Hosea, simply because they seeks the comfort of moisture and cooler temperatures shaded areas offer during the main part of the growing season.

As spring breaks,, when the trees are still void of leaf, and sunshine is not yet at its highest peak, shade loving plant material enjoy the available sunlight to start their growth period, only later to seek the protection from the warmer temperatures that come with the heat of summer.

I'd like to spend some time speaking of the advantages of shade gardening, simply put, I love it. Shade gardens offer some of the most natural environments and prosper willingly with little help from us.

Moisture is somewhat plentiful, except when the summer months are exceptionally dry and harsh on new and tender growth that many shade loving plants are known for. Prime example, Hosta, Solomon Seal, low bush blue berries, columbine, Japanese Iris, and water Iris. all thrive in the rich, moist organic content of woodland and shaded areas of our yards. These plants seem to fend for themselves, however some known diseases associated with high moisture content can cause some problem issues.

Various root rot in Iris, and Powdery Mildew, both enjoy the moisture levels these shaded areas offer and for some reason, the plant material that grow so well here can also succumb to the end result of a wide spread influx of these diseases. By all means, keep a good supply of fungicide, weather chemical or organic on hand to protect you hard work from decline.

Listed below are a few plant specimens that adapt well to the moist, organic areas of shaded areas, especially most of the ferns.

Starting with the plants that prefer a high moisture balance, here is a brief list of just a few. Others may be found throughout the internet and in gardening books specifically focused on shade gardens and the environment they enjoy.

Those plants that thrive in moist areas

Althaea officinalis or Marsh Mallow

Aruncus dioicus or Goats Beard

Astilbe spp.or Astilbe

Filipendula ulmara ir Queen of the meadow

Japanese Iris and Warer Iris

Lobelia siphilitica or Lobelia or Cardinal Flower

Trollius spp. Globe Flower

Now for some that prefer a dryer soil..Perhaps higher on slopes or upon walls that tend to be well drained

Archilla spp. or Yarrow

Artemisia spp.

Catanache caerulea or Cupids Dart

Papaver orientalis or Common Poppy

Santolina chamaecyparissus or Cotton Lavender

These are but a few examples of shade loving plants for the shade gardens, a couple more include shrubs that find shaded areas quite conducive to healthy growth and pleasant surroundings

Rhododendron Yaku Princess

Azalea lemon drops

Ground cover Blue Berry

Epimedium

I hope this brief synopsis provides some ideas and solutions to your shaded area issues. Don't be afraid of shade any more.. Shaded area provide a perfect environment for numerous native species as well as many common cultivars found in many of your local garden centers.

From more information, please visit my web site and fill in the form, located on the home page and I'll be happy to elaborate on other species and conditions you may have in question. There is plenty you can do in the shade and some of the loveliest gardens are featured in shaded areas in many gardens throughout the world over.

Visit my site at <http://www.hortservices.net> or email me at schester9@comcast.net

Your humble Horticulturist... Chet Stentiford