

Gardening in the Shade

Presented by Suzanne Mahler

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The key to a successful garden is to analyze your site and match plants to the light, soil type, and exposure your growing conditions offer. Make observations throughout the day to determine how much light is available. Note the source of the shade (deciduous foliage, evergreens, fences, buildings, etc.); how much shade, and at what time of day; soil type (wet or dry; clay, loam); exposure to wind (protected or wide open). If a garden is shaded during the morning but sunny by midday and throughout the afternoon, select plants for sunny sites. Locations that receive early morning sun or filtered light throughout the day are usually well-suited for growing shade-loving plants.

Many shade-loving plants are woodland flora by nature and prefer humus-rich, well-drained, acidic soils. Tree roots, especially those of beech, maple, and other shallow-rooted trees, compete for nutrients and moisture, and during periods of drought, may lead to the death of moisture-loving shade plants. Most flowering shade plants require morning sun, bright light, or dappled sunlight in order to flower. Consider pruning lower branches and thinning out trees and/or branches to enable additional light to filter through in heavily shaded sites. Be sure to research your selections prior to planting to ensure best results.

As the season progresses, foliage color and texture become the dominant features of the shady garden as springtime flowers fade with the leafing out of our overhead canopy. Thoughtful selection of plants can transform a monochromatic all green shade garden into a tapestry of intricate colors and textures with tints of gold, caramel, blue, silver, burgundy, and white intermingled with varying shades of green.

Shade Tolerant Woody Plants:

- 1-2 Opening scenes
- 3-4 Witch hazel: *Hamamelis* 'Arnold Promise'; *Fothergilla*; 'Blue Shadow'
- 5 American redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) 'Forest Pansy'
- 6-7 Dogwood: *Cornus florida*; *Cornus kousa*
- 8 Japanese Snowbell (*Styrax*)
- 9 *Stewartia pseudocamelia*
- 10 Blue holly: *Ilex* 'Blue Princess'
- 11 *Pieris japonica* 'Mountain Fire'
- 12 Azaleas
- 13-15 *Rhododendron*: cultivars; *yakushimanum* rhodies
- 16-18 Mountain laurel (*Kalmia*): 'Olympic Fire'; Sarah', 'Minuet'
- 19 Contemplative Japanese garden
- 20-22 *Viburnum*: *burkwoodii*; *doublefile viburnum* (*plicatum tomentosum*); 'Blue Muffin'; *tea viburnum*
- 23-28 *Hydrangea*: *H. arborescens* 'Anabelle'; 'Bella Anna'; *H. macrophylla* 'Endless Summer'; new cultivars; *H. quercifolia* (oak-leaf); *H. paniculata grandiflora* 'Limelight'
- 29-30 Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*)
- 31 Sweet pepperbush (*Clethra*): 'Hummingbird'; 'Ruby Spice'

Spring Flowering Bulbs:

- 32-33 Bulbs: snowdrops, *scilla*, *fritillaria meleagris*, *narcissus*

Perennials for Shady sites:

- 34-36 *Helleborus*: 'Jacob'; *niger* (Christmas rose); *foetidus* (Bearsfoot); *orientalis* (Lenten rose);
- 37-38 Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria*): *canadensis*; 'multiplex'
- 39-40 Lady's slippers: *Cypripedium acaule*; *calceolus* (yellow); *reginae* (showy)

- 41-42 Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*Arisaema*): triphyllum; sikokianum
 43 Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia*)
 44 Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*)
 45 Trillium: grandiflorum; luteum
 46 Leopardsbane (*Doronicum*); pardalianches ; 'Magnificum'
 47 Lungwort (*Pulmonaria*): officinalis; 'Sissinghurst White'; 'May Bouquet'; 'Majeste'
 48 Solomon's Seal (*Polygonatum odoratum*); 'Variegatum'
 49-51 Primrose (*Primula*): denticulata (Drumstick); veris; vulgaris; japonica; 'North Hill' strain
 52-53 Columbine (*Aquilegia*): Canadensis; Biedermeier; McKana hybrid
 54-55 Brunnera: Langtrees; variegata; 'Jack Frost'
 56 Crested Iris: *Iris cristata* alba; *I. cristata*
 57-58 Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra*): spectabilis; 'Gold-heart'; alba: eximia; 'King of Hearts'
 59 Goatsbeard (*Aruncus*): aethusifolius; dioicus
 60 Corydalis: lutea; ochroleuca
 61-62 Foxglove (*Digitalis*); spring shade garden
 63 Fleece flower (*Persicaria Polymorpha*); garden
 64-65 Astilbe
 66 Ligularia; the Rocket; 'Britt Marie Crawford'
 67 Bugbane (formerly *Cimicifuga*, now *Actaea*) 'Brunette'
 68 Cardinal flower (*Lobelia*): cardinalis; syphilitica (great blue lobelia)
 69 Yellow Waxbells (*Kirengeshoma*)
 70 Turtle-head (*Chelone*)
 71 Wind flowers (*Anemone japonica*); alba
 72 Monkshood (*Aconitum carmichaelii*)
 73 Toad lily (*Tricyrtis*): hirta; 'Samurai'
- Foliage plants and ground covers:**
 74-75 Garden scenes
 76-78 Ferns: Cinnamon fern; Japanese Painted Fern; Himalayan maidenhair
 79 Lamium (Dead Nettle); 'White Nancy'; 'Golden Anniversary'; 'Purple Dragon'
 80-82 Grasses: *Carex* 'Evergold' (Sedge); *Hakonechloa macra* 'Areola' (Japanese forest grass);
Chasmanthium (Northern sea oats); shade plant combinations
 83 Ginger (*Asarum*): europeus; shuttleworthii
 84-86 Barrenwort (*Epimedium*): sulphureum; 'Bandit'; 'Yubae'; fall color
 87-89 Coral bells (*Heuchera*): sanguinea; 'Palace Purple'; 'Silver Scrolls'; 'Plum Pudding';
 'Lime Rickey'; 'Caramel'; 'Citronelle'
 90-91 Foamflower (*Tiarella*): 'Spring Symphony'; 'Neon Lights'
 92 *Persicaria* 'Painter's Palette'
 93-97 Hosta: 'Fire Island'; Tokudama Aureonebulosa; 'Summer Music'; Montana Aureomarginata;
 'Curly Fries'; 'June'; 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd'; 'Rainforest Sunrise'; 'Tattoo'; 'Holy Mouse
 Ears'; 'Daisy Doolittle'; 'Cameo'; mass planting; hosta garden
 98 Coleus
 99-101 Closing scenes

Directions to Mahler Gardens (open all of July, dawn to dusk)

Take **Rte. 3 South** from Rte. 128 or SE Expressway to **Exit 13**, Hanover/Norwell.

Turn **Left** on **Rte. 53 North**.

Go approximately **.5 miles** to first set of lights and turn **Left** on **Rte. 123 West (Webster St.)**

Go **1 mile** to light and turn **Right** on **Main St.** and almost immediately **Left** on **Brookwood Rd.**

House is **9th** on **Left**, gray with stone and set back.

(Weekly gardening column available on-line at www.wickedlocal.com/hanover/fun/gardening)