

## Shrubs

**Hydrangea** (*Hydrangea* species): Heights of 3 to 20 feet, depending on species. Flowers readily in shade. Pink and blue species are not reliably hardy in the North, but white varieties bloom readily in many different regions.

**Rhododendron** (*Rhododendron*): Grow 3 to 40 feet tall, depending on species and location. Select from more than 500 species to provide a colorful early-season display in the garden.

## Bulbs

**Daffodil** (*Narcissus*): White, yellow, salmon and peach flowers in early to mid-spring that are 6 to 24 inches tall.

**Squill** (*Scilla*): Blue, purple, or white flowers that emerge in spring.

**Virginia Bluebells** (*Mertensia virginica*, now known as *Mertensia pulmonarioides*): Blue or white flowers; large leaves fade in late spring.

**Wild hyacinth** (*Camassia*): White or blue spikes of flowers in late spring or summer.

# Top Plants for Shade



  
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The dense canopy of a shade tree provides a cool hideaway on a hot summer day. What it doesn't provide is enough light for grass and many flowers to grow. But don't get out the saw or pack away your garden tools -- with these plants, you can have your shade and garden too.

## Perennials

**Aquilegia** (Columbine): Cool grey-blue lace foliage, 12"-30", and delicate blooms of white, yellow, blue, purple, pink, red or multi will attract hummingbirds.

**Astilbe** (Astilbe): Also called false spirea; grows up to 4 feet tall. Fern-like foliage and feathery flower plumes in white, red, pink and lavender from summer to fall.

**Bugbane** (Cimicifuga): One of the tallest shade perennials at 3 to 7 feet. Spikes of white flowers in summer or fall.

**Coralbells** (Heuchera): In late spring to summer, small coral, white or green flowers on plants 4 to 30 inches tall. Some varieties have bronze or purple leaves.

**Ferns**: Finely cut fronds add a variety of textures to your woodland garden. Height range from 12" - 48".

**Goatsbeard** (Aruncus): Airy plumes of cream flowers 1 to 6 feet tall. Plants are large, up to 4 feet wide.

**Hosta** (Hosta): Hundreds of varieties with attractive green, blue or variegated foliage, and spikes of white or lavender flowers. Some are up to 4 feet tall with the flower spikes.

**Meadow rue** (Thalictrum): Clusters of star-shaped or daisy-like flowers. Different varieties grow 8 inches to 8 feet tall. Flowers in summer.

**Primrose** (Primula): Colorful clusters of flowers in early spring, 2 to 24 inches.

## Annuals

**Begonia** (Begonia): Easy-care bedding plant, 5 to 16 inches tall. Clusters of white, pink and red flowers from summer through fall and waxy-looking leaves.

**Caladium** (Caladium): Grown for white, cream, green and red foliage. Up to 2 feet tall.

**Coleus** (Solenostemon scutellarioides): Grown for attractive foliage in red, green, yellow and purple, Reaches 6 to 36 inches.

**Forget-me-not** (Myosotis): Dainty blue flowers in spring on plants 4 to 12 inches tall. This biennial self-seeds and acts like a perennial.

**Impatiens** (Impatiens wallerana): Bright flowers in white, orange, red, pink, violet, coral and yellow. Grows 6 to 24 inches tall. Nonstop blooming from summer through fall make it one of the most popular shade flowers.

## Ground Covers

**Lady's mantle** (alchemilla): Clump- or mat-forming perennials with soft green leaves and chartreuse flowers in summer or fall.

**Lamium** or **Deadnettle** (Lamium maculatum): Variegated foliage lights up the shade throughout the growing season. The white or mauve flowers are an added bonus. Good in dry shade.

**Lily-of-the-valley** (Convallaria majalis): A longtime favorite of gardeners. The spring display of fragrant white bell-shaped flowers is followed by red berries. Grown in dense shade, but will move into other areas if it isn't kept under control. Poisonous.

**Pachysandra** or **Japanese spruce** (Pachysandra terminalis): Evergreen foliage topped with white flowers in spring.

**Sweet woodruff** (Galium odoratum): Pretty, fragrant white flowers in spring.

If grass won't grow under your trees, try shade-tolerant ground covers.

These provide greenery and flowers, don't need mowing and create a healthy growing situation for your trees.

Source: Birds & Blooms' Ultimate Gardening Guide by Melinda Myers