

Gardens made in the shade

Shade-Tolerant Plants for North Central Texas



What is a shade garden?

- Little to no **direct** sunlight
- Often under trees
- Usually ornamental



Photo: PlantShed.com

Light intensity

- How bright is it?
 - Increasing light: morning – noon
 - Decreasing light noon–night
- How direct is it?
 - Highest: Summer
 - Lowest: Winter



Light duration

- How long is the light exposure?
- Full sun: 10-12 hours
- Light shade: 4-6 hours
- Part shade: 2-4 hours
- Full shade: reflected sunlight



Light quality

- Sunlight: full spectrum
- Blue light: vegetation
- Red light: flowering
- **Challenge:**
 - If leaf canopies filter out blue light, what options do we have?



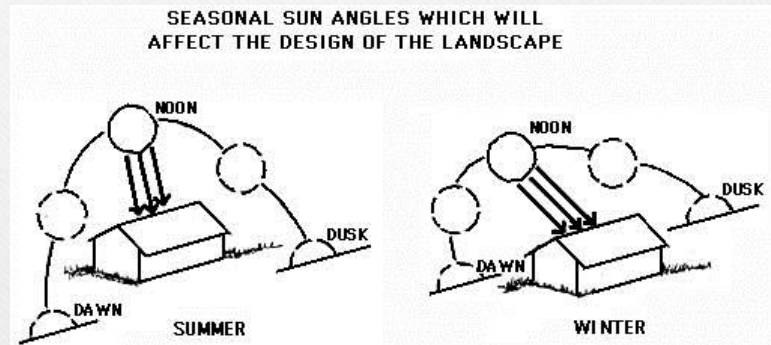
Light changes

- What is the angle?
- How direct is it?
- What is the season?
 - Southern: sunniest
 - Northern: shadiest
- What time of day?
 - **Morning sun** – afternoon shade
 - Morning shade – **afternoon sun**



Light measurement

- Monitor
 - Sun or shade plant?
- Map
 - Observation
- Light meter
- Petunia test
 - Light shade?
 - Part shade?
 - Full shade?



Types of shade

- Light shade (2-3 hrs)
- Partial shade (4-6 hrs)
- Full shade (no sun)



Photo: Randy Weston

Strategies for shade

- Reduce turf
- Use groundcovers
- Put in paths
- Play up texture
- Incorporate art



Photo: Well Done Landscaping



Groundcovers

When grass doesn't want to grow there

Bugleweed

Ajuga reptans

- Partial to full shade
- Spring bloomer
- Blue flowers
- 6" tall



Photo: Rob Broeckhuis

Cast Iron Plant

Aspidistra elatior

- Partial to dense shade
- Clumping tendency
- 1'x1.5' tall



Photo: Louis Bourgeois

Lilyturf

Liriope muscari

- Partial shade
- Purple flowers (summer)
- 2' wide x 2' tall
- Easy to divide



Photo: Ken Pei

Vines

Adding vertical interest



Parthenocissus quinquefolia

Scarlet Clematis

Clematis texensis

- Full sun to partial shade
- Spring/summer bloomer
- 1'-2' wide x 9' tall
- Deciduous
- Alkaline adaptable



Photo: Texas A&M AgriLife

Sweet Autumn Clematis

Clematis terniflora

- Full sun to partial shade
- Fall bloomer
- 15'-30' x 15'-30'
- Requires support



Photo: Texas A&M AgriLife

Virginia Creeper

Parthenocissus quinquefolia

- Partial sun to shade
- Spring bloomer
- 10' wide x 30'-50' tall
- Deciduous
- Often mistaken for poison ivy



Photo: Texas A&M AgriLife



Shrubs

More than just leaves

American Beautyberry

Callicarpa americana

- Partial to full shade
- Pink bloom (spring)
- Purple fruit (winter)
- 3-5' wide x 3-5' tall
- Deer love it



Photo: Merriwether Adventures

Coralberry

Ardisia crenata

- Partial to full shade
- Pinkish fruit (winter)
- 2' wide x 4' tall
- Forms colonies
- Good for forest garden



Photo: City of Austin

Leatherleaf Mahonia

Mahonia bealei

- Partial to full shade
- Yellow flower (late winter)
- Blue fruit (spring)
- 3-4' wide x 4'6' tall



Photo: University of Arkansas Extension



Perennials

Delights for years to come

Inland Sea Oats

Chasmanthium latifolium

- Partial to full shade
- Winter hulls
- 1-2' wide x 2-3' tall
- Clumping tendency



Photo: Lori Turnbull - NPSOT

Yellow Columbine

Aquilegia. hinkleyana

- Partial to full shade
- Yellow flowers (spring)
- 1' wide x 1.5' tall



Photo: Texas A&M

Dwarf Mexican Petunia

Ruellia brittoniana "Katie"

- Shade-tolerant
- Spring/summer bloomer to frost
- Pink, white or purple blossoms
- 1' wide x 1' tall



Photo: TexasSuperstar.com

Acknowledgements



Texas Nursery and Landscape Association

