

SECRETS FOR A STUNNING GARDEN!

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Make Your Shade Garden Better Than Ever!

Botanical Names

Coleus
Plectranthus
hybrids

Hosta
Hosta spp.
and hybrids

Shade gardens are so cool! Yes, literally, because nothing beats taking a seat and relaxing under the canopy of a big tree. But also because of the plants you can grow there. Hostas spring to mind first, of course. They're a classic. But there are lots of other options for shady borders, too. Some, such as the sweet alyssum at right, are flowery while others have awesome foliage: Imagine scalloped coral bells, lacy ferns, spotted lungwort and colorful coleus—all bringing their own unique look or texture to shady beds and borders.

Whether it's dappled, partial or full, there are some practical benefits to gardening in shade. For example, weeds have a harder time getting established and the soil stays moist longer than in full sun. Ready to add some variety to a hosta-heavy garden? Check out these inspiring groups to find the foliage and flowers that can make your shady spots even brighter and more colorful. 🌿

—*Sherri Ribbey*



Showstopping Foliage

All these perennials have foliage that looks good from the time they emerge in spring until frost. In addition, the coral bells send up long stems with tiny bell-shaped blooms that hummingbirds love. Avoid crispy leaf edges by giving plants a spot in part shade and watering regularly. A 1- to 2-inch layer of bark mulch will help conserve moisture. Tennessee gardener Lisa Manning says she planted this shade grouping tightly not only because it looks good, but because it helps keep weeds from taking hold.

- A Japanese painted fern** *Athyrium niponicum pictum* Perennial; gray-green foliage with maroon midribs; part to full shade; 12 to 18 in. tall, 18 to 24 in. wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 3 to 8
- B Coral bells** *Heuchera Creme Brulee* Perennial; small creamy yellow blooms in summer, rust-orange new leaves mature to tan then pale green; full sun to part shade; 9 to 18 in. tall, 12 to 18 in. wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 8
- C Coral bells** *Heuchera 'Cinnabar Silver'* Perennial; small red blooms in late spring to early summer, silvery leaves with purple veins; full sun to part shade; 9 to 18 in. tall and wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 9
- D Heucherella** *Heucherella 'Stoplight'* Perennial; small white flowers in late spring, yellow-green leaves with a red center blotch; part to full shade; 6 to 16 in. tall, 12 to 14 in. wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 9



GOOD TO KNOW

Growing spring-blooming flowers like these is a big help for early season bees on the hunt for food.

Early-Season Color

Dress up the front of the border or the edge of a path with low-growing spring bloomers like this charming combo. Lungwort puts on an ever-changing show with clusters of blooms that start out pink and age to purple, sporting multiple colors at one time. The stems become more lax as flowers fade. Cut them back as they head toward the ground to make way for the new growth emerging from the crown. Its fuzzy green-spotted-silver leaves will look great for the rest of the season as will easy-going bugleweed once its purple flower spikes fade. Sweet alyssum will keep blooming until fall. If it gets leggy cut it back by a third to encourage fresh growth.

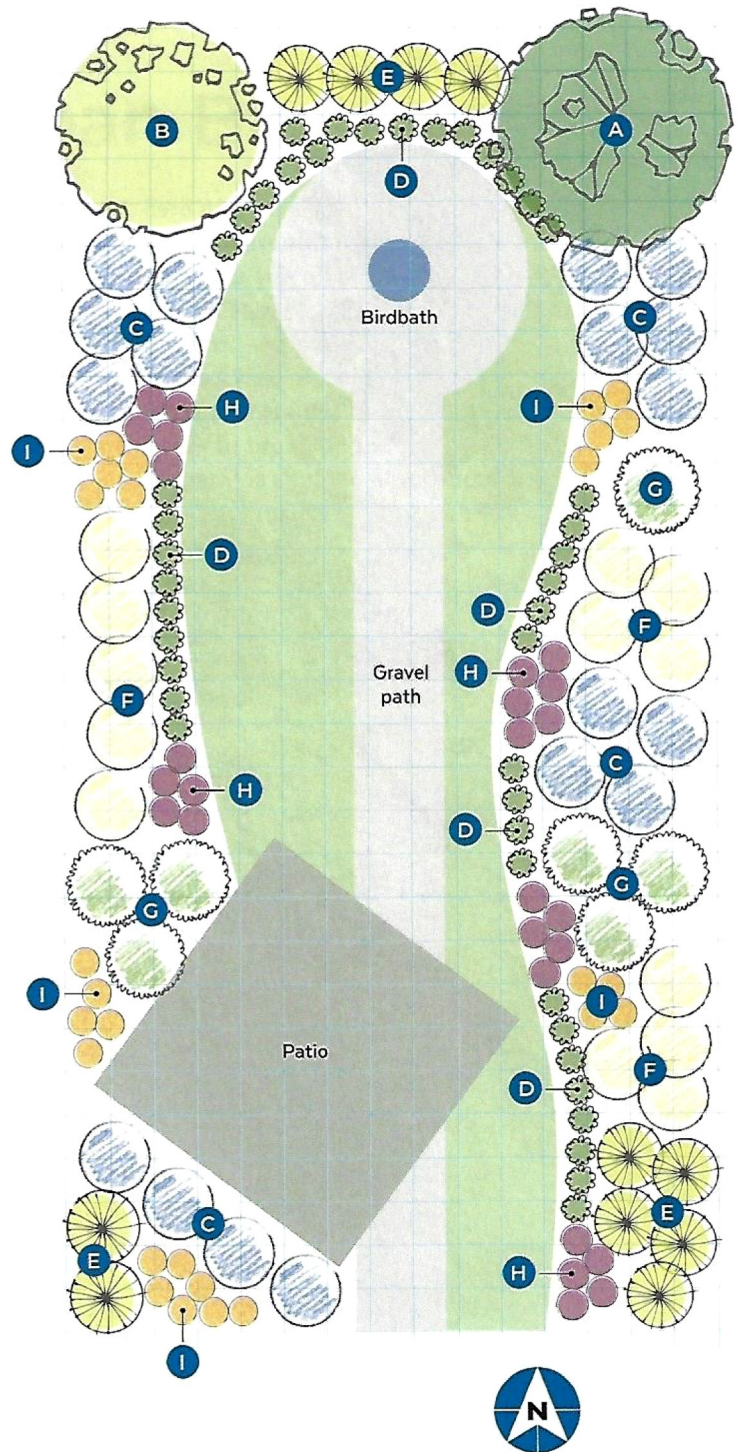
- A Lungwort** *Pulmonaria* 'Raspberry Splash' Perennial; raspberry-pink flowers age to purple in early to midspring, long narrow deep green leaves with silver spots; part to full shade; 9 to 12 in. tall, 18 to 24 in. wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 9
- B Sweet alyssum** *Lobularia maritima* Clear Crystal® White Tender perennial; fragrant white flowers from spring to fall; full sun to part shade; 6 to 10 in. tall, 12 to 14 in. wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 9 to 11
- C Bugleweed** *Ajuga reptans* 'Chocolate Chip' Perennial; blue-purple blooms in late spring, deep burgundy to green foliage; full sun to full shade; 2 to 4 in. tall, 6 to 12 in. wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 3 to 9

The Garden At-a-Glance

Plant selection in a small space is key. The plants featured here can take part shade (as well as full sun) and they exhibit more than a single season of interest. Don't clutter a small backyard with too many design elements. This will make it seem even smaller and more crowded. Using simple elements with clean lines makes for a balanced look.

Maintenance for the plants featured here could not be simpler. Once these plants are established, they should not require any coddling. And all of the maintenance can be taken care of in spring (if you leave the seedheads on the perennials for the birds over the winter). Simply cut the perennials (the amsonia, the goldenrod, the blazing star and the black-eyed Susans) back to the ground. When you see new growth at the base of the plants, you know it's safe to begin pruning them down to ground level. In warmer climates, the bergenia will remain evergreen. In that case, simply snip off any winter-damaged foliage once spring rolls around. 🌱

— James A. Baggett



- A Kousa dogwood** *Cornus kousa* Tree; pretty pointed, four-petaled white blossoms in spring are followed by pink-red berrylike fruits into fall; full sun to part shade; 15 to 30 ft. tall and wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 5 to 8 **Number to plant: 1**
- B Eastern redbud** *Cercis canadensis* The Rising Sun™ Tree; rose-purple, pealike blossoms on bare branches in spring and heart-shaped leaves that emerge glowing orange and mature to a speckled lime-green; full sun to part shade; 8 to 12 ft. tall, 8 to 15 ft. wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 5 to 9 **Number to plant: 1**
- C Bigleaf hydrangea** *Hydrangea macrophylla* Endless Summer® Shrub; large clusters of long-lasting pink or blue florets from summer through fall; part shade to full sun; 3 to 4 ft. tall and wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 9 **Number to plant: 18**
- D Bergenia** *Bergenia* 'Pink Dragonfly' Perennial; dark pink flowers on stout stalks in spring above leathery, glossy, toothed dark green leaves that turn purple-bronze in fall; part shade to full sun; 12 to 15 in. tall, 12 to 18 in. wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 8 **Number to plant: 42**
- E Arkansas amsonia** *Amsonia hubrichtii* Perennial; clusters of powdery blue star-shaped flowers in late spring atop feathery bright green needle-like leaves that turn bright gold in fall; full sun to part shade; 2 to 3 ft. tall and wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 5 to 8 **Number to plant: 11**
- F Goldenrod** *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks' Perennial; tiny bright yellow flowers on arching spires in fall held above the green wrinkled leaves; full sun; 2 to 3 ft. tall and wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 9 **Number to plant: 13**

- G Viburnum** *Viburnum carlesii* Spice Baby Shrub; large snowball-like clusters of fragrant pale pink blossoms in spring and dark green leaves that turn wine-red to burgundy in fall; full sun to part shade; 42 to 60 in. tall and wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 8 **Number to plant: 7**
- H Spike blazing star** *Liatris spicata* 'Kobold' Perennial; fluffy purple flower heads on spikes in summer; full sun; 18 to 24 in. tall, 12 to 18 in. wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 9 **Number to plant: 26**
- I Black-eyed Susan** *Rudbeckia fulgida* 'Little Goldstar' Perennial; profuse golden yellow daisy-shaped blossoms in summer through fall; full sun; 14 to 16 in. tall and wide; cold hardy in USDA zones 4 to 9 **Number to plant: 27**

