



## Shady Characters

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### Why NOT a Shade Garden?

You can't grow anything in the shade  
You can't have flowers in the shade  
You can only grow Hosta  
There's nothing but green  
It won't look natural  
It will look too natural

### Why Garden in the Shade?

It's all I've got  
I don't know what else to do  
I really like Hosta!  
Another garden style  
Another series of plants to collect  
IT'S FUN

### Shades of Shade?

#### Filtered shade

Receives some sunlight  
Through a small leaved plant  
Honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos* var. *inermis*) for example

#### Situational shade

Generated via location  
North side of a building, directional

#### Deep shade

Very little light penetrates  
Dense woodlands  
Low branching trees

#### Wet shade

Can be deep, filtered or situational  
Soil is moist, can be either well or poorly drained  
Woodlands, deep rooted trees

#### Dry shade

Deep, filtered, situational  
Soil is generally dry and hard  
Shallow rooted trees (maples), or between close buildings  
THE HARDEST PLACE TO GROW PLANTS!!  
Very limited palette of plants available

## **Design**

What do you see in nature?

4 basic layers

Overhead canopy

Smaller trees (generally seedlings)

Shrub layer

Herbaceous layer

Soil is often highly organic

Generally moist and well drained

pH can vary depending on the leaf litter involved

Replicate this look for a natural appearance

Plant with symmetry for a more formal look

Can plant in small clumps or large masses

Keep it simple!

## Pathways

Mulch, needles and stone look natural

Concrete, packed gravel (public places)

## Benches

Stop to contemplate

Enjoy the sounds of nature

Sit in the cool shade

## **Small yards**

Use other features to replicate various layers

A building for the canopy

A fence for the shrub or tree seedling layer

Small "yard art" for various shrubs

Clumping perennials vs ground covers

Overlap your plantings

Overlap your clumps

## **Getting Started**

What is on the site currently?

Weeds vs. dirt

**IF MOTHER NATURE CAN'T GROW IT, WE CAN'T EITHER!**

## **Soil Test**

pH, organic matter, fertility levels

**Remove aggressive plants**

Garlic mustard, poison ivy, Amur honeysuckle

Is the site well drained?

Is there enough organic matter?

Do you need more fertilizer?

**The FUN stuff! (the plants)**

Perennials

Ferns

Spring Ephemerals

It's a Hosta Takeover!

*Actaea racemosa* (formerly *Cimicifuga*)

*Aruncus aethusifolius* – dwarf goats beard

*Aruncus dioicus* – goat's beard

*Brunnera macrophylla* and cultivars – Siberian bugloss

'King's Ransom'

*Dicentra spectabilis* 'Gold Heart' (now *Lamprocapnos*)

*Dicentra eximia* and cultivars

*Epimedium* spp. - barrenwort

*Farfugium* spp and cultivars (formerly *Ligularia*)

*Lamium galeobdolan* 'Variegatum'

*Lamium galeobdolan* 'Herman's Pride'

*Lamium maculatum* cultivars

*Pulmonaria* spp - lungwort

*Tiarella cordifolia* - foamflower

*Iris cristata* – crested iris

*Hakonechloa macra* 'Aureola'

*Helleborus* spp – Lenten rose

*Polygonatum odoratum* 'Variegatum' – variegated Solomon's seal

*Rodgersia* spp. – Rogers flower

*Tricyrtis* spp – toad lily

*Kirengeshoma palmata* – wax bells

*Athyrium felix-femina* – lady fern

*Sanguinaria canadensis* - bloodroot

*Trillium* spp - trillium

*Erythronium americanum* – trout lily, dog tooth violet

*Asarum* spp - ginger

*Carex elata* 'Bowles Golden'

*Carex oshimensis* 'Evergold'