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SUMMER HOURS

6:30 am to 3:30 pm Monday through Friday
Closed Weekends and Holidays

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 20–22 Nursery/Landscape Expo sponsored by the Texas Nursery & Landscape Association

George R. Brown Convention Center,
Houston, TX
Information: Contact Texas Nursery &
Landscape Association, (800) 880-0343;
fax (512) 280-3012; e-mail:
info@txnla.org or visit the TNLA
website at <http://www.txnla.org>

September 9–10 Southwest Horticultural Trade Show & Conference

Phoenix Civic Plaza, Phoenix, AZ.
Sponsored by the Arizona Nursery Assc.
Information: Contact ANA, (480) 966-
0923; e-mail azna@globalcrossing.net;
website: <http://www.azna.org>

September 22–23 Western Nursery and Garden Expo

Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas,
NV. Sponsored by the California
Association of Nurseries and Garden
Centers.
Information: Contact CANGC, (800) 748-
6214; e-mail westernexpo@cangc.org;
website: <http://westernexpo.com>

October 22 Mountain States Wholesale Nursery 35th Anniversary Open-House

Mountain States Nursery Yard, 100020
W. Glendale Ave, Glendale, AZ
Stay tuned for more details!
<http://mswn.com>

July/August 2004

SHADE DWELLERS

Have you ever noticed at outdoor social gatherings during the summer how the desert natives quickly migrate to the shade? The newbies just stand there and get baked in the sun, while the old hands waste no time seeking shelter. Keeping cool is a priority. As you attempt to cool off this summer, we thought it might be fun to look at a few plants that have it “Made in the Shade.”

As the urban landscape evolves, landscapers are often forced to deal with shade situations. Property size seems to be shrinking and the relative closeness of dwellings creates canyon-like features. Commercial properties or buildings located on medical or college campuses often have dense shade conditions that call for wise plant placement.

Shade in the landscape is a relative term. It is difficult to measure. Photographers often use light meters to measure the intensity of light. But if you attempt to measure the light level under the canopy of a tree you would find that the values are constantly changing. Even so, we can develop some definitions that will aid in plant placement. Areas that are in constant shade, like beneath evergreen trees or the north side of a tall building, might be termed full shade. The filtered light of a desert tree could be referred to as light shade. Eastern exposures that have relief from the afternoon sun might be called part shade. Just remember that the amount of shade may change radically from one season to the next.

Shade can become more intense as landscapes mature too. We often hear designers lament that once the trees in the landscape begin to mature, the shade created is too dense for the original landscape material. Not to fear, a landscape makeover is in order.

In hot, low desert conditions, many plants, especially broadleaf species, prefer and benefit from some afternoon shade. These same plants would perform equally as well in full sun at a higher, cooler elevation. Most seasoned gardeners know that the vast majority of the true desert plants will suffer from too much shade, often refusing to bloom, and will ultimately decline into poor health. By knowing the light preference of a plant at a particular elevation a designer may use a lot of liberty in placement.

Remember that with less light many plants will not bloom as readily. Some may develop larger leaves as a result of deep shade. Variegated plants may lose much of their attractive appeal and turn a dark green color. The internodes (distance from one leaf to the next) may stretch as well, creating a lanky look. A few plants, especially succulents might survive for a lengthy time in deep shade but may look pretty odd after a number of years. In that event it would be a good time to consider replacement.

Soil moisture may be crucial as well. Be careful when using certain plants like cacti and succulent accent plants as they require good drainage and widely spaced irrigation. Plants such as Aloes, Portulacaria, and Drosanthemum are

quite water thrifty. It would be wise to monitor the irrigation closely.

Some plants are true bog lovers and will happily take all the water provided. Plants like fernclover, bat-faced cuphea and monkey flower love ample water. Utilize these plants like sponges placed near fountains or poorly drained sites.

When designing in shade consider using light colors to brighten gloomy corners and recesses. For example, the bright gray foliage of Artemisia comes alive, especially in moonlight. Light colored agaves seem to pop out in deep shade. Clusters of white flowers like those of Texas Olive or Santa Barbara Daisy literally seem to glow. Yellow flowering plants are similar in moonlight. Darker colors like reds and blues unfortunately tend to look rather dull and drab without the benefit of light.

So pull up a cool drink and let's take a stroll down our shady garden path. As your eyes become accustomed to the softness of the light, your senses will heighten. You will be able to smell the fragrances of the flowers and the soil. Your skin will feel awash in the coolness of the air.

NOTE: The following list of plants, approximate sizes and relative shade tolerance was developed for use in low deserts. For middle and higher elevations, one might be more daring. PS equates to part shade, like in the afternoon. LS means light shade, as in under a large tree. FS refers to full shade, where a large building overhang or canopy renders shade consistently.

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	SIZE	FEATURES
<i>Abutilon palmeri</i>	Indian Mallow	5 x 5	PS LS
<i>Agave bovicornuta</i>	Cow's Horn Agave	4 x 4-5	PS LS
<i>Agave bracteosa</i>	Spider Agave	1-2 x 1-2	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Agave desmettiana</i>		3 x 3	LS Good drainage
<i>Agave desmettiana 'Variegata'</i>		3 x 3	LS Good drainage
<i>Agave geminiflora</i>	Twin-flowered Agave	3 x 3	LS FS Good drainage
<i>Agave guiengola</i>		3 x 4	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Agave macroacantha</i>		2 x 2	PS Good drainage
<i>Agave parryi</i>	Parry's Agave	3 x 3	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Agave potatorum</i>	Butterfly Agave	2 x 2	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Agave shawii</i>		6 x 6	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Agave sisalana</i>	Hemp Plant	6 x 6	LS Good drainage
<i>Agave vilmoriniana</i>	Octopus Agave	4 x 6	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Agave weberi</i>	Weber Agave	5 x 10	PS Good drainage
<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	Medicinal Aloe	2 x 3	PS LS FS
<i>Aloe dawei</i>	Dawe's Aloe	3 x 3	PS LS
(Actually, virtually all the species of Aloe on our price list would prefer some shade in low elevation deserts.)			
<i>Amsonia grandiflora</i>	Large-flowered Blue Star	3 x 3	PS
<i>Anemopsis californica</i>	Yerba Mansa	1.5 x 1.5	PS FS Ample water
<i>Aquilegia caerulea</i>	Colorado Blue Columbine	1.5 x 3	PS
<i>Aquilegia chrysantha</i>	Golden Columbine	3 x 3	PS FS
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	Prairie Sagebrush	3 x 6	PS LS
<i>Bauhinia lunarioides</i>	Orchid Tree	12 x 10	LS
<i>Berlandiera lyrata</i>	Chocolate Flower	1 x 2	LS
<i>Bulbine frutescens</i>	Tiny Tangerine™	1 x 1.5	PS LS
<i>Bulbine frutescens, yellow</i>	Shrubby Bulbine	1.5 x 2-3	PS LS
<i>Carex spp.</i>	Sedges	1-1.5 x 1-1.5	PS LS
<i>Cercis canadensis var. mexicana</i>	Mexican Redbud	25 x 25	LS
<i>Cereus hildmannianus</i>	Hedge Cactus	20 x 15	LS
<i>Cissus trifoliata v. incisa</i>	Grape Ivy	20	PS FS
<i>Conoclinium greggii</i>	Boothill™	1-2 x 2-3	PS
<i>Cordia boissieri</i>	Texas Olive	25 x 25	FS
<i>Cuphea flavea</i>	Bat-faced Cuphea	2-3 x 3	PS LS Ample water
<i>Dalea capitata</i>	Sierra Gold™	0.5 x 3	LS Good drainage
<i>Dasyllirion quadrangulatum</i>	Toothless Desert Spoon	10 x 6-8	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Didiplera resupinata</i>	Native Didiplera	2 x 2-3	LS
<i>Drosanthemum speciosum 'Rosea'</i>	Iceplant	1 x 3	LS
<i>Epilobium californica 'Catalina'</i>		3 x 5	LS
<i>Erigeron divergens</i>	Native Fleabane	1 x 1	LS
<i>Erigeron karvinskianus 'Profusion'</i>	Santa Barbara Daisy	1 x 2-3	PS LS
<i>Eysenhardtia orthocarpa</i>	Kidneywood	18 x 15	LS
<i>Fraxinus greggii</i>	Little Leaf Ash	12-15 x 10-15	PS
<i>Gaura lindheimeri 'Siskiyou Pink'</i>	Pink Gaura	2-3 x 3-4	PS
<i>Gaura lindheimeri 'Whirling Butterflies'</i>	White Gaura	2-3 x 3-4	PS
<i>Glandularia pulchella</i>	Rock Verbena	1 x 2	LS

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	SIZE	FEATURES
<i>Hamelia patens</i>	Texas Firecracker Bush	5 x 5	PS
<i>Justicia spicigera</i>	Mexican Honeysuckle	3-4 x 3-4	LS
<i>Lobelia laxiflora</i>	Loose-flowered Lobelia	1 x 2	PS Ample water
<i>Lonicera x americana 'Pam's Pink'</i>	Pam's Pink Honeysuckle	4-5 x 6	LS
<i>Manfreda maculosa</i>	Texas Tuberose	1 x 1-2	LS PS FS
<i>Marsilea macropoda</i>	Fernclover	1 x 2	LS PS Ample water
<i>Mimulus cardinalis</i>	Scarlet Monkey Flower	2 x 3	PS LS FS Ample water
<i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i>	Regal Mist™	3 x 3	LS
<i>Muhlenbergia dumosa</i>	Bamboo Muhly	4-5 x 4-5	LS
<i>Muhlenbergia emersleyi</i>	El Toro™	3 x 3	LS
<i>Muhlenbergia lindheimeri</i>	Autumn Glow™	5 x 5	LS
<i>Muhlenbergia porteri</i>		3 x 3	LS
<i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i>	Deer Grass	4 x 4	LS
<i>Muhlenbergia rigida</i>	Nashville™	2 x 2	LS
<i>Nassella tenuissima</i>	Mexican Feather Grass	2 x 2	LS
<i>Oenothera speciosa 'Siskiyou'</i>	Mexican Evening Primrose	1 x 3	PS LS
<i>Oenothera stubbei</i>	Baja Primrose	1 x 4-6	PS LS
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i>	Indian Fig	15 x 10	PS LS
<i>Parthenocissus sp.</i>	Hacienda Creeper™	25	PS
<i>Pedilanthus macrocarpus</i>	Lady's Slipper	3-4 x 3-4	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Penstemon cobaea</i>	Foxglove Penstemon	1 x 1	PS LS
<i>Penstemon pseudospectabilis</i>	Canyon Penstemon	1 x 1	PS LS
<i>Penstemon triflorus</i>	Hill Country Penstemon	1 x 1	PS LS
<i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	Russian Sage	4-5 x 4-5	LS
<i>Plumbago scandens</i>	Summer Snow™	3 x 3-4	PS
<i>Poliomintha maderensis</i>	Lavender Spice™	3 x 3	LS
<i>Portulacaria afra</i>	Elephant Food	12 x 12	PS
<i>Rhus trilobata</i>	Three Leaf Sumac	3-5 x 8-10	PS
<i>Rhus trilobata 'Autumn Amber'</i>	Prostrate Sumac	2-3 x 6-8	PS
<i>Ruellia brittoniana 'Katie,' 'Rosa,' 'Blanca'</i>	Dwarf Ruellia	1 x 1-2	PS LS FS
<i>Russelia equisetiformis</i>	Coral Fountain	4 x 4-6	LS
<i>Salvia clevelandii</i>	Chaparral Sage	5 x 6	PS LS
<i>Salvia farinacea</i>	Texas Violet™	2-3 x 2-3	PS
<i>Salvia greggii</i>	Sierra Linda™	3 x 3	PS
<i>Salvia leucantha</i>	Mexican Bush Sage	4 x 4	LS
<i>Sambucus nigra ssp. cerulea</i>	Elderberry	10-20 x 25	LS
<i>Sophora secundiflora</i>	Texas Mountain Laurel	15 x 15	PS LS
<i>Sphagneticola trilobata</i>	Yellow Dot	1 x 4-6	PS LS FS
<i>Wedelia texana</i>	Devils River™	3 x 3	PS
<i>Yucca pallida</i>		1-2 x 1-3	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Yucca rupicola</i>	Twisted Leaf Yucca	2 x 2-3	PS LS Good drainage
<i>Yucca schottii</i>	Mountain Yucca	6-12 x 3-6	LS Good drainage
<i>Zephyranthes candida</i>	White Rain Lily	1 x 1	PS LS
<i>Zephyranthes x 'Prairie Sunset'</i>	Rain Lily	1 x 1.5	PS LS