



BLACKWOOD'S
home of gardening

PLANTS FOR HEAVY SHADE

Many older, mature gardens have large areas covered in shade for much of the day. This poses a challenge in terms of finding plants that will grow successfully in these conditions. As a general rule, foliage plants with green leaves perform best in shade. Think of ferns and mosses that thrive in these conditions as an example. Conversely, colourful flowers are rather rare or scarce in shaded gardens. Careful use of different leaf shapes, forms and textures can be utilised to great effect in these growing conditions. Regular watering is also important to keep plants flourishing in most shaded growing environments.

This is a short list of suitable plants for KwaZulu-Natal gardens. Botanical name first with common names in (brackets).

Key:

(E) = evergreen

(I) = indigenous

(S) = seed

(B) = bulb

(N) = nectar rich

(D) = deciduous

(F) = fruit

(C) = climber

(H) = herb

(T) = thorns

Annuals and Perennials (low growing)

Acanthus mollis (Greek rhubarb) (D)

Anemone japonica hybrids (Japanese anemone or windflower) (D)

Aquilegia x hybrid (columbine) (D)

Asparagus plumosus (asparagus fern) (E) (I)

Aspidistra elatior (cast iron plant) (E)

Begonia albopicta (cane begonia) (E) – Note: many cane begonias grow in shade

Begonia manicata (leopard begonia) (E) - Note: many rhizomatous begonias grow in shade

Begonia x richmondensis (shrub begonia) (E) - Note: many shrub begonias grow in shade

Caladium x hortorum (angel wings) (D) (B)

Calathea zebrina (zebra plant) (E) - Note: many calatheas grow in shade

Chlorophytum saundersiae 'Starlight' (variegated weeping anthericum) (E) (I)

Clivia miniata - species and hybrids (bush lily) (E) (I)

Clivia nobilis (Eastern Cape clivia) (E) (I) - Note: all clivias grow in shade

Colocasia esculenta (elephant's ear or taro) (ED) (B)

Ctenanthe oppenheimiana 'Tricolor' (never never plant) (E)

Dianella tasmanica 'Variegata' (dianella) (E)

Dietes bicolor (yellow wild iris) (E) (I)

Dietes grandiflora (white wild iris) (E) (I)

Drimiopsis maculata (green drimiopsis) (D) (I) (B)

Fern Adiantum cuneatum (maidenhair fern) (E) - Note: most ferns grow in shade

Fern Davallia mariesii (squirrels foot fern) (E)

Fern Microlepia speluncae (fern) (E)

Fern Pellaea rotundifolia (brake) (E)

Fern Phlebodium aureum (rabbit's foot fern) (E) (I)

Fern Pteris cretica 'Albolineata' (variegated brake) (E)

Fern Rumohra adiantiformis (leather leaf fern)

Haemanthus albiflos (white paint brush) (E) (I)

Helleborus niger - and hybrids (Lenten rose) (E)

Hosta ventricosa - and a host of hybrids (hosta) (D)

Hypoestes sanguinolenta (polka dot plant) (E)

Impatiens walleriana 'Beacon' hybrids (busy lizzie) (E)

Liriope muscari 'Evergreen Giant' (tall lily turf) (E)

Maranta leuconeura (prayer plant) (E)

Primula acaulis (primrose) (E)

Primula malacoides (fairy primrose) (E)

Sansevieria trifasciata (mother-in-law's tongue) (E)

Scadoxus membranaceus (dwarf paintbrush) (D) (I) (B)

Scadoxus multiflorus subsp katherinae (Katharine wheel) (D) (I) (B)

Scadoxus puniceus (blood lily or snake lily) (D) (I) (B)

Solenostemon scuttelarioides - all hybrids and cultivars (coleus or Joseph's coat) (E)

Streptocarpus - species and hybrids (ED) (I)

Thalictrum dipterocarpum (meadow rue) (D)

Zantedeschia aethiopica (white arum lily) (ED) (I)

Groundcovers (low growing)

Ajuga reptans - all hybrids and cultivars (ED)
Asparagus densiflorus 'Mazeppa' (emerald fern) (E) (I)
Bergenia cordifolia (elephant's ears) (ED)
Bromeliad: Aechmea gamosepala (lucky stripes) (E) - Note: many bromeliads grow in the shade
Bromeliad: Billbergia nutans (friendship plant) (E)
Bromeliad: Cryptanthus 'Pink Starlight' (earth star) (E)
Bromeliad: Neoregelia 'Fireball' (bromeliad) (E)
Bromeliad: x Cryptbergia rubra (hybrid bromeliad) (E)
Chlorophytum comosum 'Vittatum' (hen and chickens) (E) (I)
Dichondra repens (wonder lawn) (E)
Lamium galeobdolon (dead nettle) (E)
Lysimachia nummularia 'Aurea' (golden creeping Jenny) (E)
Liriope muscari (lily turf) (D)
Liriope muscari 'Variegata' (variegated lily turf) (D)
Ophiopogon jaburan (tall mondo grass) (E)
Ophiopogon japonica (mondo grass) (E)
Ophiopogon 'Kyoto' (dwarf mondo) (E)
Pilea microphylla (artillery plant) (E)
Pilea nummulariifolia (creeping Charlie) (E)
Plectranthus ciliatus (Swedish ivy) (E) (I)
Plectranthus oertendahlii (Swedish ivy) (E) (I)
Plectranthus verticillatus (Swedish ivy) (E) (I)
Saxifraga stolonifera (mother of thousands) (E)
Selaginella kraussii (club moss) (E) (I)
Soleirolia soleirolii (peace-in-the-home) (E)
Vinca major 'Marginata' (giant periwinkle) (E)
Viola hederacea (Australian violet) (E)
Viola odorata (sweet violet) (E)

Shrubs and Climbers (medium growing)

Aucuba japonica all cultivars (Japanese laurel) (E)
Buxus microphylla 'Faulkner' (small leaf box) (E)
Buxus sempervirens 'Superba' (box hedge) (E)
Camellia japonica - most hybrids and cultivars (japonica) (E)

Chamaedorea elegans (parlour palm) (E) (P)
 Chamaedorea seifrizii (reed palm) (E) (P)
 Cissus antarctica (wild grape) (E) (I) (C)
 Cordyline terminalis cultivars (Ti plant) (E)
 Dracaena fragrans (dragon tree) (E)
 Dracaena reflexa (pleomele) (E)
 Dracaena reflexa var angustifolia (dracaena marginata, dragon tree) (E)
 Euonymus japonicus - all hybrids (spindle bush) (E)
 Fatsia japonica (Japanese aralia) (E)
 Fern: Blechnum gibbum (hard fern) (E) – Note: most ferns grow in shade
 Fern: Cyrtomium falcatum (holly fern) (E)
 Fern: Cyathea brownii (tree fern) (E)
 Fern: Cyathea dregei (wild tree fern) (D) (I)
 Fern: Dicksonia Antarctica (man fern or woolly tree fern) (E)
 Hedera helix - cultivars and named hybrids only (English ivy) (E) (C)
 Hoya carnosa (wax flower) (E) (C)
 Hydrangea macrophylla - most hybrids and cultivars (Christmas rose or mop head) (D)
 Ilex aquifolium - most Ilex (holly) (E)
 Mackaya bella (river bells) (E) (I)
 Mahonia lomariifolia (grape holly) (E)
 Monstera deliciosa (delicious monster) (E)
 Nandina domestica - all hybrids and cultivars (sacred bamboo) (ED)
 Philodendron 'Hope' (monster plant) (E)
 Philodendron 'Xanadu' (xanadu) (E)
 Plectranthus 'Mona Lavender' (plectranthus) (E) (I)
 Plectranthus ecklonii - all colours (mintleaf) (E) (I)
 Prunus laurocerasus (English laurel) (E)
 Rhododendron indicum - hybrids and cultivars (azalea) (E)
 Ruscus hypoglossum (butcher's broom) (E)
 Sarcococca humilis (Chinese box) (E)
 Strobilanthes anisophyllus (strobilanthes) (E)
 Trachelospermum jasminoides (star jasmine) (E) (C)
 Viburnum odoratissimum (hedging viburnum) (E)

Disclaimer:

Whilst every care and caution has been taken in compiling these lists in terms of correctness and accuracy, Blackwood's, nor any of their employees can be held liable or responsible if any of the recommendations are found to be incorrect in any way whatsoever. They are merely a guide to help gardeners and staff in finding solutions to gardening problems. All plants listed may not be available for sale at times. They do however all grow in the greater KwaZulu-Natal area and are to be found growing successfully in local gardens.

BLACKWOOD'S HOME OF GARDENING

ASSAGAY - 4 Bona Terra Road | 031-768 2173

HILTON - The Avenues Centre, Cnr of Elizabeth Dr & Hilton College Rd | 033-880 0239

HOWICK - Yard 41, 4 Shafton Rd | 033-330 3364

PIETERMARITZBURG - 97 Chatterton Rd | 033-342 2191

RICHARDS BAY - 1 Medway Rd, Meerensee | 035-880 0047

www.blackwoods.co.za