

## PLANTS FOR SHADY AREAS

Almost every garden has an area where, due to dry and shady conditions, it has become increasingly difficult to grow plants. Over the years I have discovered a select number of plants that will hopefully solve this problem.....

### FATSIA JAPONICA

Fatsia is among the most dramatic of Britain's hardy foliage plants. Its large, glossy, tropical looking leaves are evergreen and only replaced in midsummer when the old ones fall off. They have white fragrant blooms in November and December and some varieties bear black berries on white stalks from May to June.



### AUCUBA JAPONICA

Native to rich soil forests and moist valleys, the Aucuba has interesting variegated foliage which would compliment any garden to add depth and texture. They come in both male and female plants and when placed together, the female produces attractive red berries which add further to their beauty. They are ideal as a shade tolerant plant and if allowed to grow freely can reach 16 ft in height.



## MAHONIA

**This evergreen shrub suffers from only one major drawback .... it seems to occur in everybody's garden. There is a reason for this as its year-round beauty and usefulness has made this inevitable.**

**The attractive foliage with holly-like leaflets, fragrant yellow flowers early in the year and a crop of blue-black berries later in the season. The Japonica is the most popular variety which grows so well in shade and the aquifolium is used as ground cover under trees.**



## BERGENIA

**These are clump-forming rhizomatous evergreen perennials with a spirally arranged rosette of leaves with pink flowers. The leaves are large, leathery and often have waxy or saw-toothed edges. For**

most of the year, the leaves have a glossy green colour, however, in cooler climates, they turn red or bronze in the autumn. The flowers grow on a stem similar in colour to a rhubarb stalk and most varieties have cone-shaped flowers in varying shades of pink and can range from almost white to ruby and purple.



### CRINUM X POWELLII

An incredibly tough plant in the form of a bulb but also classed as a perennial as it will come back year after year after year. The flowers consist of up to 10 pink lilly-like blooms on stout stems and there may be as many as 50 stems on one clump at any one time, making for an amazing display in a shady area. It starts to bloom in late July and finishes in mid-September.



### HELLEBOROUS

**A species of evergreen perennial, hellebores come in over 20 different varieties. They are sometimes referred to as Christmas Rose but have not links to the rose family. The flowers have five petals, or sepals surrounding a ring of small, cup-like nectarines.**

**The sepals do not fall as petals would but remain on the plant, sometimes for many months. They flower from December through to May and then dead-headed in June. The foliage is also attractive which is all cut back in November when soon after the new foliage starts to appear.**



## **CHOISYA**

**This is a hardy evergreen shrub which does well in all condition. Known for their abundant and fragrant flowers, their foliage is also aromatic smelling of rue when bruised or cut. The flowers are also valued for honeybee forage and producing abundant nectar. The varieties range from Ternata and Sundance with their yellow tinged leaves to Aztec & White Dazzler with their pointed leaves and large flowers.**



### LINARIA DALMATICA

The flowers appear on extended stems, in whorls of three. Each one looks like a canary; lemon-yellow. Perched facing inwards with its tail poking outwards. The grey-green foliage is beautiful and forms a loose rosette. Flowers and foliage persist for long periods of the year, depending on the weather and prevailing conditions, although the plant's main performance is in summer. As it self seeds, it produces a disorganised patch of eye-catching colour from April to November.



### MELITTIS MELISSOPHYLLUM

This plant grows wild in the south of England where it is commonly known as “Bastard Balm”. It resembles a bushy deadnettle but has big, creamy-pink auxiliary flowers with darker tips and lips, that bloom between May and July and make a shapely herbaceous bush over several years. There is a white coloured form that really shines out in shady conditions.



## FERNS

**A fern is any one or more of a group of roughly 12,000 species of plants belonging to the botanical group known as Pteridophyta.**

**Unlike mosses, they have xylem and phloem, making them vascular plants. They have stems, leaves and roots. They reproduce via spores and have neither seeds nor flowers. They grow at the base of woods and forests where sunlight is scarce and some are cultivated for the purpose of removing chemical pollutants from the air. The leaves are at their best from August to May and die back in June and July.**

