

## Moist Shade

Growing in shade challenges plants because of the limited availability of light which is required for photosynthesis (the cunning way plants make their food from sunlight). Add to that a shortage of moisture, then a plant is really up against it, so many of the plants on this list also appear on the one for dry shade - in a nutshell, they tolerate dry shade, but grow better when more moisture is available. For others, the wetter the ground the better.

### Evergreen Shrubs

*Aucuba japonica* – the Spotted Laurel is an unfussy shrub – slow-growing, tolerant of a wide range of soils, happy in the sun where its yellow spots give the best colour, and contented in dry shade where it cheers up dark corners and hedge-bottoms. It can be grown as a hedge itself and either clipped to shape or left to grow more loosely.

*Buxus sempervirens* – the Box – tolerates a wide range of soil pH, including very alkaline soils

*Camellia japonica* has glossy, dark leaves which make an excellent evergreen background to other plants all year once its glorious spring flowers are over. An acid-lover with an ideal pH between 5.5 and 6.5.

*Euonymus fortunei* varieties, such as *E. fortunei* 'Silver Queen' whose white and green variegated leaves become tinged with pink in winter.

*Fatsia japonica* – its large, glossy, hand-shaped leaves cheer up dark corners. Mulching the root to protect from frost recommended as a frost-damaged plant can then regenerate from the root.

*Ilex aquifolium* – the Holly, which is good in shade, partial shade or sun. Prefers well-drained, neutral to acid soil.

*Pachysandra terminalis* is a very dwarf evergreen shrub, which spreads to make dense ground cover beneath larger shrubs and trees. It is happiest on acid soil in full or partial shade.

*Sarcococca* – the Christmas Box – an evergreen that produces very fragrant, though insignificant, flowers over winter. The leaves tend to look rather sickly if it is grown in full sun.

*Skimmia japonica* – a valuable plant because its red berries last all autumn winter, often until the flowers appear the following spring. Prefers neutral to acid soil, but is happy on heavy clay. Plant both male and female plants for the best display of berries.

### Deciduous Shrubs

*H. paniculata* 'Kyushu' requires partial shade. It holds its abundant white flowers far longer than other Hydrangeas.

*Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Dawn' bears fragrant, pink flowers on bare stems from November to February and gives good autumn colour. It requires a light, moist but well-drained soil and is happy in partial shade.

### Climbers

*Euonymus fortunei* varieties, such as *E. fortunei* 'Silver Queen' whose white and green variegated leaves become tinged with pink in winter, can be trained against a wall in partial shade.

*Hedera helix* and *Hedera colchica* varieties – the Ivies thrive in shade and are excellent grown on shady or north-facing walls. They come in such a range of leaf shapes, sizes and variegation and

vein pattern that preference is subjective. Left to spread across the ground, they also make good ground cover.