‘TOP’ SHRUBS AND VINES FOR LIGHT SHADE

By Pat Curran

Usually long-lived, disease/pest resistant, generally winter-hardy, won’t spread too much

**Shrubs (Shade Tolerance or Preference Varies)**

Chionanthus virginicus, fringetree  
Daphne mezereum, February daphne  
Daphne ‘Carol Mackie’  
Fothergilla major ‘Mt. Airy’  
Hamamelis vernalis ‘Sandra’, vernal witchhazel  
Hamamelis virginiana & ‘Mohonk Red’, witchhazel  
Hamamelis x hybrida ‘Arnold Promise,’ ‘Jelena’, hybrid witchhazel  
Hydrangea quercifolia, oakleaf hydrangea  
Ilex glabra, inkberry  
Ilex verticillata ‘Winter Gold’, winterberry  
Kerria japonica, Japanese kerria  
Lindera benzoin, spicebush  
Mahonia aquifolium, Oregon grapeholly  
Myrica pensylvanica, bayberry  
Rhododendron, Finnish hybrid rhododendrons ‘Pohjola’s Daughter,’ ‘Haaga’ extra-hardy evergreens for acid soil  
Rhododendron, Northern Lights series azaleas ‘Spicy Lights,’ ‘Rosy Lights’ extra-hardy deciduous for acid soil native with large magenta flowers  
Rubus odoratus, flowering raspberry  
Stephanandra incisa, cutleaf stephanandra  
Symphoricarpos albus, snowberry

**Comments**

beautiful specimen; dioecious#  
early bloomer; poisonous fruits  
variegated leaves; fragrant flowers  
fragrant early flowers; good fall color;  
spring bloomer; fall foliage color  
native locally, fall bloomer, fall foliage color  
flower buds damaged below -10 F; fall color  
dioecious# native evergreen holly  
dioecious# native deciduous holly  
green stems in winter; medium shade OK  
dioecious# native; spring bloom  
flowers & fruit, but winter leaf scorch  
dioecious# native; salt-tolerant  
suckers and self-layers; dwarf cultivar available  
white fruit

**Vines for Light Shade**

Aristolochia macrophylla, Dutchman’s pipe  
Hydrangea anomala petiolaris, climbing hydrangea

**Comments**

twining vine grown for foliage  
rootlike holdfasts cling to masonry or wood;

# dioecious: separate male and female plants; both are needed for female plant to produce fruit

**Reference:**

Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation and Uses, Sixth Edition, Michael Dirr (invaluable and comprehensive, but no color pictures)

Dirr’s Encyclopedia of Trees & Shrubs, Michael Dirr (great color pictures, but not as comprehensive)

Shrubs & Vines for American Gardens, Trees for American Gardens, 2 books by Donald Wyman (older references with great plant lists, but do not use USDA hardiness zones)

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