



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION • YOLO COUNTY
 70 Cottonwood Street, Woodland, CA 95695 Tel. (530) 666-8143 Fax (530) 666-8736

SHADE PLANTS FOR YOLO COUNTY

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	HEIGHT	FLOWER COLOR	TIME OF BLOOM	LIGHT REQUIREMENT	DESCRIPTION/NOTES
TREES:						
Acer palmatum	Japanese maple	6-20'	insignificant	spring	morning sun, filtered light or partial shade	deciduous; autumn leaf color; those with less finely divided leaves do better here
Arbutus unedo	strawberry tree	8-35'	white	fall	sun to partial shade	evergreen; showy red fruits; attractive reddish bark
Cercis canadensis	eastern redbud	25-35'	rosy pink, white	early spring	sun to partial shade	deciduous; heart-shaped leaves; provides good spring color
Osmanthus fragrans	sweet olive	10-30'	white	spring and early summer	partial shade	evergreen; glossy leaves; small but highly fragrant flowers
Podocarpus gracilior	fern pine	20-60'	none	not applicable	sun to partial shade	evergreen; may be kept pruned to shrub-height or grown in a container
SHRUBS:						
Abutilon species and cultivars	flowering maple	3-15'	white, yellow, orange, red	late spring through fall	partial shade	evergreen; graceful, open branch structure; pendant bell-shaped flowers
Aucuba japonica	Japanese aucuba	6-10'	dark maroon, insignificant	early spring	partial to full shade	evergreen; yellow and green variegated form provides color
Berberis thunbergii	Japanese barberry	3-6'	yellow	spring	sun to partial shade	deciduous; graceful habit with spiny branches; autumn color; red berries in winter

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Brunfelsia pauciflora 'Floribunda' or 'Floribunda Compacta'	yesterday-today- and-tomorrow	6-10'	changes from purple, lavender to white	spring	partial shade or filtered light	evergreen to semi-evergreen; showy spring color; all parts of plant are poisonous
Carpenteria californica	bush anemone	4-6'	white	late spring to summer	partial shade	evergreen; slow grower; showy flowers; CA native
Daphne odorata	winter daphne	3-6'	pink buds, white with pink throat	late winter	partial shade	evergreen; clusters of very fragrant flowers; needs good drainage
Euonymus fortunei	winter creeper	6"-5'	pink, insignificant	spring	partial shade	evergreen; dark green or variegated leaves; many cultivars
Fatsia japonica	Japanese aralia	5-8'	creamy white	fall to winter	partial or full shade	evergreen; tropical-looking shrub; clusters of flowers followed by shiny black berries
Hydrangea macrophylla	garden hydrangea	4-8'	white, pink, blue	summer to fall	partial shade	deciduous; add soil sulfur to avoid chlorosis; very showy flower clusters
Hydrangea quercifolia	oakleaf hydrangea	6'	white, turning pinkish purple with age	late spring to early summer	partial shade	deciduous; deeply lobed, dark green leaves turn bronze or crimson in fall
Loropetalum chinense	fringe flower	6-10'	white or pink	heaviest in spring, sparsely through fall	partial shade	evergreen; some cultivars have maroon new growth or foliage
Mahonia aquifolium/ Berberis aquifolium	Oregon grape	6'	yellow	early spring	partial shade	evergreen; each leaflet resembling a holly leaf; edible, blue black berries
Nandina domestica	heavenly bamboo	2-8'	white	spring	sun to full shade	evergreen; cane-like stems; finely textured foliage; red berries

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Pittosporum tobira	tobira	2-15'	creamy white	spring	partial shade	evergreen; whorls of shiny leaves; fragrant flowers; variegated and dwarf forms available
Rhamnus alaternus	Italian buckthorn	10-20'	inconspicuous	spring	sun to partial shade	evergreen; fast, dense growth; shiny, bright green leaves; small black berries
Rhamnus californica	coffeeberry	3-15'	inconspicuous	spring	sun to partial shade	evergreen; dark green to yellowish green leaves; berries red to black; CA native
Ribes sanguineum	pink winter currant	5-12'	deep pink to red	late winter, early spring	partial shade	deciduous; arching branches; dark green leaves; CA native
Sarcococca ruscifolia	sweet box	3-5'	white	late winter, early spring	partial to full shade	evergreen; waxy, dark green leaves; small, highly fragrant flowers
Viburnum tinus	laurustinus	6-12'	pink buds, white flowers	fall to spring	sun to partial shade	evergreen; leathery, dark green leaves; metallic blue berries
VINES:						
Akebia quinata	five-leaf akebia, chocolate vine	15-30'	purple-brown	spring	sun to full shade	semi-evergreen; green leaves with 5 rounded, notched leaflets; vanilla-scented flowers
Clytostoma callistegioides	violet trumpet vine	to 30'	violet	late spring to fall	sun to partial shade	evergreen; shiny, bright green leaves; showy trumpet-shaped flowers
Hardenbergia violacea	lilac vine	to 10'	violet, rose, white	late winter	partial shade	evergreen; dull, green leaves; clusters of small, sweet pea-shaped flowers

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Trachelospermum jasminoides	star jasmine	20-30'	white	spring	sun to partial shade	evergreen twining vine; shiny green leaves; highly fragrant flowers
PERENNIALS:						
Acanthus mollis	bear's breech	4-5'	white, rose, purple	spring through summer	partial to full shade	bold, coarse leaves; good plant for back of border
Aeonium species and cultivars	-	1.5-5'	cream, yellow, pink	spring through summer	partial shade	succulents; leaves resemble a multi-petaled flower; frost sensitive
Agapanthus species and cultivars	lily-of-the-nile	1-5'	white, pale to dark blue	mid-spring through summer	can take full sun but best with afternoon shade	wide range of heights; some available with variegated leaves
Anemone x hybrida	Japanese anemone	2-4'	white, pink, rose	fall to winter	partial shade	deeply lobed, hairy leaves; graceful, branching flower stems with 2" flowers
Aquilegia species and cultivars	columbine	2-4'	white, pastels, deep shades of red, yellow, purple	spring, some may rebloom in summer	morning sun or partial shade	creates a woodland effect; A. formosa, a CA native, may bloom throughout summer
Aspidistra elatior	cast iron plant	2-3'	maroon, insignificant	spring	partial to full shade	slow-growing; bold foliage; dry shade; almost indestructible
Bergenia cordifolia	heartleaf bergenia	12-18"	white, pink, rose, lilac	late winter to early spring	partial to full shade	evergreen; heart-shaped leaves,; some have reddish foliage in winter; stalks of nodding flowers
Bergenia crassifolia	winter-blooming bergenia	12-18"	rose, lilac, purple	late winter to early spring	partial to full shade	evergreen; foliage up to 8" across with wavy or toothed edges; dense clusters of flowers

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Bulbine frutescens	cape balsam	12"	yellow	spring through fall	part sun to partial shade	hollow leaves resembling chives; stalks of small flowers rise above leaves
Campanula poscharskyana	Serbian bellflower	8-12"	blue, lavender, dull white	spring to early summer	partial shade	spreading, mounding leafy clump; star-shaped flowers 0.5-1" across; small-scale ground cover
Dianella tasmanica	flax lily	3-4'	blue	summer	partial shade	clumps of bold grass-like leaves, some variegated with white; airy spikes of small flowers
Farfugium japonicum (Ligularia tussilaginea)	leopard plant	18-24"	yellow	summer to fall	partial to full shade	leaves are glossy, bright green or yellow-spotted, kidney-shaped; yellow, daisy-like flowers
Geranium species and hybrids	cranesbill	6-18"	white, pink, blue, purple, magenta	late spring to early summer	afternoon shade	finely cut leaves; 5-petaled, 1-2" wide flowers; well-drained soil; regular water
Helleborus orientalis	hellebore, Lenten rose	12"	greenish white, pink, rose, purple	late winter to spring	partial to full shade	leathery, dark green leaves with 5-11 sharply-toothed leaflets; 2-3" flowers
Heuchera species and cultivars	coral bells	1-3'	white, pink, red	early spring to late summer	partial shade	clusters of green, bronze, chartreuse or variegated leaves; stems of bell-shaped flowers; H. micrantha is a CA native
Iris foetidissima	gladwin iris	18-24"	lavender blue	spring	partial shade	seed pods with bright red seeds provide fall color; green and white variegated form
Justicia carnea	Brazilian plume flower	3-6'	pink, rose	summer to fall	partial to full shade	semi-woody plant; showy flowers
Liriope species and cultivars	lily turf	10-18"	white, blue, purple	mid-spring through summer	partial to full shade	resemble clumps of grass; many small flowers on stalks that rise above foliage

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Ophiopogon japonicus	mondo grass	6-8"	lilac	spring	partial to full shade	resemble clumps of grass; flower stalks usually buried by foliage
Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Nigrescens'	black mondo grass	6-8"	white to purple	spring	partial to full shade	nearly black foliage; good with contrasting foliage
Oxalis species	wood sorrel	4-12"	white, pink	spring through summer	partial shade	leaves resemble a clover in shape; stems bear delicate five-petal flowers; avoid O. pes-caprae, an invasive with yellow flowers
Tradescantia virginiana	spiderwort	12-18"	white, blue, purple, pink	summer	partial shade	clump-forming; may self sow; prefer regular watering; often sold as T. Andersoniana Group
Viola species	violet	2-8"	white, pink, blue, violet	late winter through spring	partial shade	clusters of heart-shaped leaves; flowers held above leaves
GROUND COVERS						
Ajuga reptans	carpet bugle	6-9"	white, blue	spring to early summer	partial shade	spreads by runners; green, bronze, purple or variegated leaves
Glechoma hederacea	ground ivy	1-3"	blue	spring to early summer	partial sun to full shade	trailing plant; soft green or green/white leaves with scalloped edges
Lamium maculatum	spotted nettle	6-8"	white, pink	late spring to early summer	partial to full shade	spreads to 3' wide; leaves have a central white to silvery gray zone
Lysimachia nummularia	creeping jenny	4-8"	yellow	late spring to summer	partial shade	spreads to 2' or more; will spill over walls; 'Aurea' is a yellow-leaved cultivar
Vinca minor	dwarf periwinkle	4-6"	white, blue, blue-violet	spring	partial to full shade	trailing, arching stems; shiny, evergreen leaves; flowers to 1" wide
ANNUALS, PLANTS GROWN AS ANNUALS:						

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Impatiens walleriana	busy lizzie	6 - 24"	all colors except yellow and blue	spring through fall	partial to full shade	profusely flowering plant; good in pots and hanging baskets; needs moderate water
Begonia	begonia	6 - 36"	pink, red, orange, white yellow, bicolor	spring through fall	partial shade	variety in form, leaf color; some with showy flowers; needs moderate water
Cyclamen persicum	florists' cyclamen	4 - 8"	white, pink, red, magenta, bicolor	fall through spring	partial shade	winter color; may naturalize but prefers dry period through summer dormancy
Myosotis	forget-me-not	6-12"	blue with white eye	late winter to summer	partial shade	soft, hairy foliage; small flowers set loosely along top of stem
Primula malacoides	fairy primrose	8-15"	white pink, rose red, lavender	winter through late spring	partial shade	soft, pale green, oval leaves; tiered blossoms in lacy whorls
Primula Polyanthus Group	English primrose	8-12"	almost any color	winter through late spring	partial shade	bright green, tongue-shaped leaves; clusters of flowers
Torenia fournieri	wishbone flower	12"	white, magenta, purple	summer through fall	partial shade	slightly trailing habit; tubular flowers with flared lip
Solenostemon scutellarioides	coleus	8-24"	blue, but insignificant	summer through fall	partial shade	grown for multicolored foliage
Viola x wittrockiana	pansy	6-10"	white, blue, purple, mahogany, red, rose, yellow, orange	fall through spring	sun to partial shade	shiny, green, oval leaves; 6-petaled flowers often with dark blotches on lower petals
FERNS:						
Cyrtomium falcatum	Japanese holly fern	2-3'	none	not applicable	partial to full shade	evergreen; coarse-textured; shiny, dark green leaves

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<i>Nephrolepis cordifolia</i>	southern sword fern	2-3'	none	not applicable	partial to full shade	bright green, narrow, upright fronds; drought tolerant
<i>Polystichum munitum</i>	western sword fern	2-4'	none	not applicable	partial to full shade	leathery, dark green fronds; first erect then spreading; CA native
<i>Rumohra adiantiformis</i>	leather fern	2- 3'	none	not applicable	partial to full shade	glossy, deep green, finely cut, leathery leaves; good in arrangements
GRASSES & SEDGES						
<i>Carex tumulicola</i> (C. <i>divulsa</i>)	Berkeley sedge	18"	green	winter to spring	partial shade	bright green, arching leaves
<i>Festuca glauca</i>	common blue fescue	8-12"	cream	summer	sun to partial shade	blue gray to silver gray foliage
<i>Miscanthus</i> species and cultivars	silver grass, maiden grass	1.5-14'	pink to bronze	summer to fall	sun to partial shade	clump-forming; feathery flower plumes; dwarf to giant forms

References: Sunset Western Garden Book, January 2007; Hortis Third, copyright 1976.

Compiled by Linda Magrum

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