

Shady Characters Starring in Gardens Across the South

Written by Laura Lee Rose
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When the temperatures rise in the South there is only one place to be – in the shade. Since plants can't get up and go to the shade, some of them would prefer being planted there in the first place.

Choosing the right plant for a garden may require some trial and error. I have tried in vain to grow salvias in the shade, and they just don't. I have much better luck with begonias, impatiens, and ferns, because my yard is mostly shade. Even shade lovers enjoy bright light. Variegated leaves can brighten up a dark garden corner. The native variegated Solomon's Seal (below) is very pretty with its creamy stripes on small olive, green leaves. A variegated ground cover is strawberry begonia (above). Its pinkish-green leaves have soft hairs, and the delicate white blooms are charming on slender stems. A couple of other groundcovers that will take dry shade are Ajuga, green and gold, Japanese roof iris, and partridgeberry.

Moisture is necessary in the right amount. Many ferns grow in damp sites, but others like bracken

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