

TAUNTON'S

PLAN NOW FOR A LATE-SEASON HARVEST

fine Gardening

8 stylish summer PLANTINGS

**How to design
EYE-CATCHING
CONTAINERS**

**WHICH SALVIAS
ARE WORTH
YOUR MONEY?**

**The best shrubs
FOR SHADE**

**A well-designed
collector's garden?
IT CAN HAPPEN**

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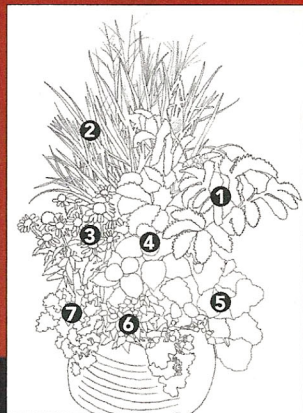


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Expand your definition of a "bright" plant

Even though most people wouldn't consider honey bush or ornamental oregano as particularly "bright" plants, in this combo they definitely glow against the dark coleus and heuchera. Contrasting form is also essential here, seen in the juxtaposition of the serrated edges of some of the foliage with the smoothness of others, and in the relationship between the vertical plants and the horizontal, mounded ones.

The coleus, though, is the one plant that brings everything together; it provides color echoes, separation between colors, and a bold leaf to contrast with just about everything around it. But without the oregano, this container would be flat, missing the lightest of lights that take this color palette from somber to joyous.



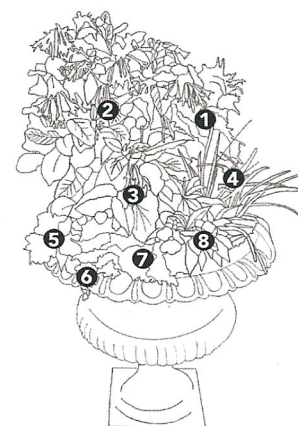
1. Honey bush (*Melianthus major*, Zones 7–10)
2. 'Shenandoah' switch grass (*Panicum virgatum* 'Shenandoah', Zones 5–9)
3. Sombrero® Adobe Orange coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea* 'Balsomador', Zones 4–9)
4. Campfire® coleus (*Plectranthus scutellarioides* 'UF12-22-1', Zone 11)
5. 'Obsidian' heuchera (*Heuchera* 'Obsidian', Zones 4–9)
6. 'Acapulco Orange' ornamental pepper (*Capsicum annuum* 'Acapulco Orange', annual)
7. 'Kent Beauty' ornamental oregano (*Origanum* 'Kent Beauty', Zones 6–9)





**Lime plus charcoal
equals instant
contrast**

The electric green of an outstanding begonia enlivens this combination for partial shade. The begonia's bold, waxy leaves draw the eye and lend solidity that offsets the abundance of finer texture. The bright foliage also provides a counterpoint for the dark foliage of the black mondo grass and the fuchsia.



- 1. White-tipped Japanese cedar** (*Cryptomeria japonica* 'Knaptonensis', Zones 6–8)
- 2. 'Gartenmeister Bonstedt' fuchsia** (*Fuchsia* 'Gartenmeister Bonstedt', Zones 9–10)
- 3. 'Canary Wings' begonia** (*Begonia* 'Canary Wings', annual)
- 4. Black mondo grass** (*Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens', Zones 6–9)
- 5. Forever® Red heuchera** (*Heuchera* 'TNHEUFR', Zones 4–9)
- 6. Himalayan maidenhair fern** (*Adiantum venustum*, Zones 5–8)
- 7. Golden spikemoss** (*Selaginella kraussiana* 'Aurea', Zones 7–9)
- 8. New Guinea impatiens** (*Impatiens hawkeri* cv., annual)



LIKE IT 'Jack Frost' brunnera
(*Brunnera macrophylla* 'Jack Frost')

ZONES: 3–9



LOVE IT!



Beesia (*Beesia deltophylla*)

ZONES: 6–9

SIZE: 12 to 18 inches tall and 18 to 24 inches wide

CONDITIONS: Partial to full shade; moist, well-drained soil

NATIVE RANGE: China

Get evergreen sparkle in the shade

For a variation on the classic brunnera heart-shape leaf, try beesia, which surely deserves to rub shoulders with the best of the shade plants. It has shiny evergreen foliage with lighter veins that emerge from the crown in spring flushed with chocolate burgundy. Throughout late spring and summer, it produces vertical spikes of airy white flowers. Few shade plants are evergreen, so beesia can offer invaluable winter presence when other perennials are slumbering underground. It's also tolerant of deep shade, unlike brunnera.





LIKE IT 'May Night' salvia
(*Salvia × sylvestris* 'May Night')

ZONES: 4–9



LOVE IT! 'Blue Boa' anise hyssop
(*Agastache* 'Blue Boa')

ZONES: 5–9

SIZE: 2 to 3 feet tall and
1 to 2 feet wide

CONDITIONS: Full sun; well-
drained soil

NATIVE RANGE: North America

A pollinator plant that goes the distance

'May Night' salvia was chosen as Perennial Plant of the Year in 1997 for good reason. It is an extremely hardy plant and popular with pollinators thanks to its spikes of purple flowers in late spring to early summer. But if you're looking for a pollinator plant with purple blooms that last even longer, try 'Blue Boa' anise hyssop. Its upright spikes of violet-blue flowers (with warm purple bracts) show up in early summer and keep coming through fall. *Agastache* are popular with practically all pollinators, including bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds, and they have the added bonus of mint- or licorice-scented foliage that makes them less appealing to deer.





LIKE IT 'Angelina' sedum (*Sedum 'Angelina'*)
ZONES: 3–9



LOVE IT! Gold 'n Sapphires™
 lithodora
 (*Lithodora diffusa* 'LITGS')



ZONES: 5–8
SIZE: 8 to 12 inches tall and
 24 to 36 inches wide
CONDITIONS: Full sun to partial
 shade; moist, fertile, well-
 drained soil
NATIVE RANGE: Southwestern
 Europe

Stunning contrast from a largely unknown plant

In the world of ground covers, 'Angelina' sedum has been one of the best introductions for the sunny garden in many years. Its linear, succulent, bright gold foliage produces stunning mats of texture and color. It is shy to flower, and when it does, it sports nondescript yellow blossoms that don't contrast markedly with the foliage. Another popular ground cover, lithodora, has recently offered up a gold-foliaged form called Gold 'n Sapphires™. It has glowing lemon yellow, linear foliage in full sun, where it is surprisingly tolerant of the intense light, or lime green foliage in less light. Mid to late spring is when the full show occurs, with boldly contrasting royal blue flowers smothering the spreading mats. Lithodora doesn't like to dry out, so be sure to give it supplemental water during periods of drought.

SOURCES

- **Digging Dog Nursery**, Albion, CA; 707-937-1130; diggingdog.com
- **Far Reaches Farm**, Port Townsend, WA; 360-385-5114; farreachesfarm.com
- **Plant Delights Nursery**, Raleigh, NC; 919-772-4794; plantdelights.com
- **Phoenix Perennials and Specialty Plants**, Richmond, B.C.; 604-270-4133; phoenixperennials.com