

STATE-BY-STATE  
GARDENING

# WISCONSIN GARDENING

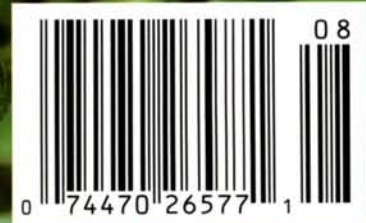
WISCONSIN'S OWN GUIDE TO GREAT GARDENING & LANDSCAPING

**EASY CARE ROSES**  
NO CHEMICALS NEEDED

**PRACTICALLY  
PERFECT  
PENSTEMONS**  
TIPS FOR  
GROWING AND  
USING PENSTEMONS

**GORGEOUS  
GARDEN PATHS**  
TIPS FOR DESIGNING  
THE PERFECT  
PATHWAY THROUGH  
YOUR SPECIAL  
GARDEN

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**AMAZING  
ROSES**  
THAT DON'T SHY FROM THE COLD



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## On the Cover

Easy Elegance All The Rage (*Rosa* 'BALrage') adds showstopping coral buds that open to a glowing apricot blend.

Featured on page 19.  
Photo courtesy of Kathleen Hennessy.

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# YES!

## You Can Grow That in the Shade

Story by Susan Martin

Yes, there really is life beyond hostas in the shade garden. Though hostas add beautiful, bold texture to the shade, they need companions to bring out their best traits.

Here, you'll learn about 10 perennials that perform beautifully in varying degrees of shade. Many of them are considered traditional sun perennials, but you may be surprised that you can grow them in shade, too. Look for the recommended varieties and those pictured here at your local retailer this season.



Tall bearded iris  
(*Iris* 'Celebration Song')

Photo courtesy of Susan Martin

**Tall Bearded Iris (*Iris*)**—No garden would be complete without tall, bearded irises, and since they'll grow and bloom in both sun and part shade, you're sure to find just the right spot for a few. Newer varieties offer large, majestic blooms in late spring to early summer and some even rebloom in fall. Be sure to provide good soil drainage so the plants don't rot. **Recommended varieties:** 'Feed Back', 'Immortality' and 'Lovely Señorita'. Hardy in USDA Zones 3 through 10.



Golden Japanese  
spikenard (*Aralia  
corolata* 'Sun King')

Photo courtesy of Susan Martin

**Golden Japanese Spikenard (*Aralia corolata* 'Sun King')**—Offering rare height for shade, the brilliantly colored 'Sun King' grows at least 3 feet tall, making it a great backdrop for shorter shade-loving plants. Its large, compound leaves are bright gold in part shade and more chartreuse in heavier shade. Short white flower spikes appear in late summer followed by black berries. This bold perennial may look tropical, but it is very hardy. Perhaps best of all, the deer won't eat it! Hardy in USDA Zones 3 through 9.



Grand Parade bee balm  
(*Monarda didyma* 'Arcade')

Photo courtesy of PerennialResource.com

**Bee Balm (*Monarda* spp.)**—Though bee balm is commonly grown in the sun, it also grows well and blooms in light to part shade. A favorite of hummingbirds and butterflies, cultivars of this native perennial range in height from 1 to 5 feet and have flowers in vibrant shades of red, purple and pink. It blooms during the hottest parts of summer. Newer varieties offer much greater resistance to powdery mildew, a common issue with this perennial. **Recommended varieties:** 'Pardon My Pink', 'Purple Rooster' and 'Gardenview Scarlet'. Hardy in USDA Zones 4 through 9.



Heartleaf brunnera (*Brunnera macrophylla* 'Jack Frost')

Photo courtesy of PerennialResource.com



Cardinal Flower  
(*Lobelia cardinalis*)

Photo courtesy of PerennialResource.com

**Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)**—This Midwest native is an excellent perennial for moist to boggy soils in part shade to full sun. Its flaming red flowers are absolute hummingbird magnets from late summer into fall. Butterflies and swallowtails also delight in the blossoms' sweet nectar, but thankfully deer and rabbits don't find them nearly as delicious. Although the native *Lobelia cardinalis* bears green foliage, you can also find cultivars with deep purple leaves. **Recommended varieties:** Fan Scarlet (*Lobelia x speciosa* 'Fran Scharlach') and Fan Deep Rose (*L. x s.* 'Orchidrosa'). Hardy in USDA Zones 5 through 9.

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**Heartleaf Brunnera (*Brunnera macrophylla*)**—Ten years ago, few gardeners had ever heard of heartleaf brunnera. Then along came 'Jack Frost', a chance seedling discovered by the West Michigan nursery Walters Gardens. Within a year, it became internationally known and now several more cultivars are available. All are woodland plants that thrive in part to full shade and richly organic soils. The heart-shaped leaves have varying amounts of silvering depending on the cultivar, but all produce baby blue, forget-me-not-like flowers in spring. A must-have for the shade garden! **Recommended varieties:** 'Emerald Mist' and 'Looking Glass'. Hardy in USDA Zones 3 through 8.



Lavender mist meadow rue  
(*Thalictrum rochebrueanum*  
'Lavender Mist')

Photo courtesy of Susan Martin

**Lavender Mist Meadow Rue (*Thalictrum rochebrueanum* 'Lavender Mist')**—A definite conversation piece for your garden, this towering perennial can easily measure 6 to 8 feet tall when it's in bloom. Its open, airy texture gives it a see-through look, adding depth to the border. A cloud of tiny, lavender flowers floats above the clump of distinctive green foliage from midsummer through late summer. They are fabulous in fresh bouquets—use the flowers like you would baby's breath (*Gypsophila muralis*). Hardy in USDA Zones 3 through 8.



Goat's beard  
(*Aruncus dioicus*)

Photo courtesy of Susan Martin

**Goat's Beard (*Aruncus dioicus*)**—Now here's a perennial that will grow in just about any amount of sunlight as long as the soil stays moist. To see it at its best, plant goat's beard in open to part shade. Depending on which variety you choose, it may grow 10 inches or 5 feet tall, so be sure to read the label when you make your purchase. All have creamy white, feathery flower plumes similar to an *Astilbe*. Generally the taller the plant grows, the larger the flowers will be. **Recommended varieties:** 'Misty Lace' and *A. aethusifolius*. Hardy in USDA Zones 3 through 7.



Clips Blue bellflower  
(*Campanula carpatica*  
'Blue Clips')

Photo courtesy of www.PerennialResource.com

**Bellflower (*Campanula* spp.)**—There are two types of bellflowers: low-growing, rock garden types and taller, upright types. Each one grows and blooms in part shade. Rock garden types require excellent drainage, so they thrive on rock walls and slopes. Taller, upright types grow best in fertile, moist soils. If you choose wisely, you can have bellflowers in bloom in your garden from late spring through late summer. **Recommended varieties:** 'Pearl Deep Blue' (*C. carpatica* 'Pearl Deep Blue', 'Freya' (*C. glomerata* 'Freya') and 'Takion Blue' (*C. persicifolia* 'Takion Blue'). Hardy in USDA Zones 7 through 8.



'Stairway to Heaven' Jacob's  
ladder (*Polemonium reptans*  
'Stairway to Heaven')

Photo courtesy of Susan Martin

**Jacob's Ladder (*Polemonium* spp.)**—Thriving in northern climates, this super hardy perennial may look delicate but it is surprisingly easy to grow. Jacob's ladder is happiest in part shade and moist soils, making it the perfect partner for hostas, astilbes and ligularias. Grow this beauty as much for its distinctive foliage as for its fragrant, blue flowers in early summer. Look for variegated, purple and green foliage selections at your favorite local retailer. **Recommended varieties:** *P. reptans* 'Touch of Class', *P.* 'Heaven Scent' and *P. boreale* 'Heavenly Habit'. Hardy in USDA Zones 3 through 7.