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UC Marin Master Gardeners - Plants for shade



Botanical Name: *Abutilon 'White Parasol'*

Common Name: White Parasol Flowering Maple

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Half, Shade

Water: Low, Medium

White Parasol Flowering Maple grows to 6' tall and bears lantern-like flowers. It has short, sturdy black stems, large fuzzy leaves, and large, white blossoms, sometimes basally tinged with pink. It is irresistible to hummingbirds. Flower maples take sun to moderately deep shade, with little or no summer water in coastal areas. They should be given more shade and water in hotter, drier climates. They make an excellent plant for containers.

Plant Height: 3-6', 6-12'

Flower Color: Yellow, White

Attracts Wildlife:

Leaf Color:

Flower Season: Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall, Constant



Botanical Name: *Acer circinatum*

Common Name: Vine Maple

Plant Type: Tree, Shrub

Sun: Half, Shade

Water: Low, Medium

This plant is either a shrub or small tree that reaches 35' in height. It has light green leaves which turn orange-scarlet in the fall. It also has new spring foliage with a reddish hue. *A. circinatum* can be used as an espalier against a wall. To accent Vine Maple effectively, plant it with the Douglas Fir, Western Sword Fern, as well as the Oregon-Grape. It has a color that is especially striking during the fall season.

Plant Height: 25-40'

Flower Color: Green, Red

Attracts Wildlife: Birds, Wildlife

Leaf Color: Light Green

Flower Season: Spring



Botanical Name: *Arbutus unedo*

Common Name: Strawberry Tree

Plant Type: Tree, Shrub

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Low

This plant is either a small tree or large evergreen shrub. It has a red-brownish trunk and branches that are twisted with age. The dark green leaves have red stems. It has clusters of small, white or greenish-white urn shaped flowers and small, red and yellow fruit that has a strawberry like texture from which the common name is derived. It has slow to moderate growth to 15' with the same spread. It can become damaged in severe winters.

Plant Height: 6-12', 12-25'

Flower Color: White

Attracts Wildlife:

Leaf Color:

Flower Season: Winter, Fall



Botanical Name: *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*

Common Name: Bearberry

Plant Type: Ground cover

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Low

A hardy, creeping evergreen shrub, it grows 6"-12" high and spreads as much as 10"-12'. It has glossy green leathery leaves attached to dark brown branches. Its flowers are white to light pink in late winter and early spring; berries are bright red.

Plant Height: Under 1'

Flower Color: Pink, White

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Dark Green

Flower Season: Winter



Botanical Name: *Aucuba japonica*

Common Name: Japanese Aucuba

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Half, Shade, Deep Shade

Water: Medium

This attractive shrub is grown for its shiny, green, evergreen, large foliage with yellow streaks. It can slowly reach 8'-10' tall and wide. During spring, small purple red flowers appear followed by red berries in the fall. Plant in half to full shade in well draining soil. This plant tolerates coastal conditions and air pollution. It is used as a house plant also. It does better with regular watering.

Plant Height: 6-12'

Flower Color: Purple, Red

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Green, Yellow, Variegated

Flower Season: Spring



Botanical Name: *Camellia japonica*

Common Name: Japanese Camellia

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Half, Shade

Water: Medium, Extra in Summer

This beautiful evergreen shrub can reach 6-15' tall, depending on the variety. It is intended for growth in filtered sun to shade, with regular water and more in hot summer areas. They make excellent container plants. White, pink or red flowers bloom in winter. Camellia prefers well draining, acid soil. Mulch well to keep roots cool. Additional Common Names: Common Camellia

Plant Height: 6-12', 12-25'

Flower Color: Pink, Multi-Colored

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Green, Dark Green

Flower Season: Winter



Botanical Name: *Carex oshimensis* 'Everillo'

Common Name: EverColor® 'Everillo' Carex

Plant Type: Grass

Sun: Half, Shade

Water: Medium, Extra in Summer

Everillo wins our best plant for brightening up shady spots, or for adding a pop of color to a mixed container. This easy care evergreen grass can be used as a groundcover, to edge a path or patio, or tucked into a living wall or window box.

Plant Height: Under 1'

Flower Color: n/a

Attracts Wildlife:

Leaf Color:

Flower Season: n/a



Botanical Name: *Clivia miniata*

Common Name: Kaffir Lily

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Half, Shade

Water: Medium

A clumping evergreen bulb, this Kafir Lily produces long, strapped-shaped leaves. Deep orange to red orange, funnel-shaped flowers appear above foliage in late winter and spring. Red berries appear after bloom period. It tolerates deep shade to half sun. The plant requires frost protection. It performs well in containers. Bulbs will spread and do well when crowded.

Plant Height: 1-3'

Flower Color: Orange

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Dark Green

Flower Season: Winter, Spring



Botanical Name: *Coprosma* 'Pacific Sunrise™'

Common Name: Pacific Sunrise Coprosma

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Medium, Extra in Summer

Coprosma Pacific Sunrise™ is a striking evergreen plant growing to 3 ft high with a glossy wave shaped leaf consisting of chocolate brown foliage with hot-pink highlights. Stunning for pots or the garden and works well in mass plantings. Colors intensify in the cooler spring and autumn temperatures. It grows best in a well drained soil and prefers full sun to partial shade.

Plant Height: 1-3'

Flower Color: n/a

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Brown, Pink, Red

Flower Season: n/a



Botanical Name: *Correa 'Wyn's Wonder'*

Common Name: Wyn' Wonder Australian Fuchsia

Plant Type: Shrub, Ground cover

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Low

Wyn's Wonder grows to about 2-3' in height, and 4-5' in width. It is an attractive shrub has variegated leaves of green and white. In the fall appear the one inch long rose-pink flowers. It grows best when planted in full sun to light shade in a well drained soil. Irrigate regularly to only occasionally. A great plant for the border or large container.

Plant Height: 1-3'

Flower Color: Pink

Attracts Wildlife: Hummingbirds

Leaf Color: Green, Light Green, White

Flower Season: Winter, Fall



Botanical Name: *Daphne odora 'Aureo-marginata'*

Common Name: Variegated Winter Daphne

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Half

Water: Medium, Extra in Summer

This shrub will reach about 3'-4' tall and wide. It has a rounded habit and grows at a moderate rate. It has a small, glossy, green, evergreen leaves with white margins. It has pale pink, fragrant flowers that bloom in spring. This shrub does best in part sun, regular watering and more during hot spells. This plant does best in fertile, well draining soil.

Plant Height: 3-6'

Flower Color: Pink

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Green, White, Variegated

Flower Season: Spring



Botanical Name: *Digitalis purpurea*

Common Name: Common Foxglove

Plant Type: Perennial

Sun: Half

Water: Medium, High

This biennial Foxglove will reach up to 4' when blooming in the early summer. The large spire of huge, bell-shaped flowers ranges from purple to pink to cream with purple specks. Large, textured leaves form an attractive rosette until bloom time. This plant likes a moist, filtered-sun area similar to the Lobelias and Columbines.

Plant Height: 3-6'

Flower Color: Pink, Purple, Multi-Colored

Attracts Wildlife: Hummingbirds

Leaf Color: Green, Grey Green

Flower Season: Spring, Summer



Botanical Name: *Dryopteris arguta*

Common Name: Coastal Wood Fern

Plant Type: Fern

Sun: Shade

Water: Medium, High, Extra in Summer

Dryopteris arguta, with the common name coastal woodfern, is a species of wood fern that grows to about 2'. It is native to the west coast and western interior mountain ranges of North America, from British Columbia, throughout California, and into Arizona. *Dryopteris arguta* is somewhat variable in appearance. Leaflets sometimes turn at an angle from the leaf, giving it a ruffled or lacy look, and the toothed leaflets may have bristles at their tips.

Plant Height: 1-3'

Flower Color: n/a

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Green, Red

Flower Season: n/a



Botanical Name: *Euonymus fortunei* 'Emerald Gaiety'

Common Name: Emerald Gaiety Euonymus

Plant Type: Broadleaf Evergreen, Shrub, Vine

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Very Low, Low

This evergreen shrub will grow 4-5' tall and 3' wide, and it has small, deep green leaves that are edged in white.

Plant Height: 1-3', 3-6'

Flower Color: n/a

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Dark Green, White, Variegated

Flower Season: n/a



Botanical Name: *Fatsia japonica*

Common Name: Japanese Aralia

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Half, Shade, Deep Shade

Water: Medium, Extra in Summer

This evergreen shrub has large, glossy, fan-like leaves that grow to 16" wide. It has a moderate growth rate to a size of 5'-8' tall and wide that can be kept lower with occasional pruning. It has a very lush, tropical appearance, and grows well in partial shade. During winter, white flowers appear followed by black berries. Looks great in containers or in shade gardens or even as a houseplant near window with good lighting. This shrub does best with moist, acidic, well draining, fertile soil. It does not tolerate full sun or wind. When established, it will tolerate drought and urban pollu ...

Plant Height: 3-6', 6-12'

Flower Color: White

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Green

Flower Season: Winter



Botanical Name: *Fuchsia X hybrida*

Common Name: Fuchsia Hybrids

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Half, Shade

Water: High, Extra in Summer

The Fuchsia hybrids are tender evergreen shrubs that are well known for their beautiful flowers. In some areas, they perform as annuals. They do best in afternoon shade, protected from wind. Fuchsias do best with moist, fertile, well draining soil. Some varieties are susceptible to aphids and spider mites. Typically 2' tall and wide. Flowers are usually bi-colored, in shades of pink, red or white, usually blooming from spring through fall. It does best with lots of fertilizer and good air circulation.

Plant Height: 1-3'

Flower Color: Pink, Red, White, Multi-Colored

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Green, Dark Green, Light Green

Flower Season: Spring, Summer, Fall



Botanical Name: *Helleborus argutifolius*

Common Name: Corsican Hellebore

Plant Type: Perennial

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Medium, Extra in Summer

As a clumping, evergreen perennial, this plant bears large, palmate, toothed blue green leaves above and purple coloring below. Clusters of greenish yellow flowers above foliage from fall through spring. It tolerates full sun in coastal areas but needs afternoon shade in warm inland valleys. Needs medium watering but older plants may become drought tolerant. Not a long lived plant, perhaps 5 years but will re-seed. Reaches 4' tall and wide.

Plant Height: 3-6'

Flower Color: Green, Yellow

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Blue Green, Purple

Flower Season: Winter, Spring, Fall



Botanical Name: *Heteromeles arbutifolia*

Common Name: Toyon

Plant Type: Tree, Shrub

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Very Low, Low

Evergreen shrub typically grows up to 8' tall and 5' wide, sometimes larger, with leathery, toothed, green leaves. Small, white, fragrant flowers appear in late spring or early summer, followed by clusters of red winter berries. Tolerates full sun, part shade, heat, smog, wind, and heavy or light soils. Established plants are drought tolerant. May take several years to become established, after which it's great for erosion control. Prune a little bit all year long if desired, or wait till August/September for a heavier prune.

Plant Height: 6-12'

Flower Color: White

Attracts Wildlife:

Leaf Color:

Flower Season: Spring, Summer



Botanical Name: *Heuchera maxima*
Common Name: Island Alum Root
Plant Type: Ground cover, Perennial
Sun: Full, Half, Shade
Water: Low, Medium

This attractive California native has 2"-3" wide, evergreen leaves that are dark green but may turn reddish in winter. Foliage is mounding and dense. During spring, thin vertical stems emerge covered with small light pink flowers. Overall height of plant in bloom is 3' tall, spreading up to 2'. This Heuchera tolerates full sun in coastal areas but needs afternoon shade or full shade in warm inland areas. Can be planted under oaks. This plant tolerates clay soil. Established plants need only occasional water. Hummingbirds love these plants.

Plant Height: 1-3'
Flower Color: Pink, White
Attracts Wildlife: Hummingbirds
Leaf Color: Dark Green
Flower Season: Spring



Botanical Name: *Hydrangea macrophylla* 'Lacecap'
Common Name: Lacecap Hydrangea
Plant Type: Shrub
Sun: Half, Shade
Water: High, Extra in Summer

This deciduous shrub has beautiful blooms in the summer. It can reach 3'-4' tall and has a rounded form. This shrub prefers shade although a bit of sun will allow for more blooms. The flowers change color depending on acidity of soil. Hydrangea needs moist, fertile soil. This is a delightful addition to any semi-shady corner of the garden.

Plant Height: 3-6'
Flower Color: Blue, Pink
Attracts Wildlife: n/a
Leaf Color: Green
Flower Season: Summer



Botanical Name: *Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Snow Queen'
Common Name: Pee Wee Oak Leaf Hydrangea
Plant Type: Shrub
Sun: Half
Water: Medium

This attractive deciduous shrub grows 4' tall and 3' wide. Leaves are broad, lobed and green (resembling oak leaves) turning reddish purple in fall. Clusters of white flowers appear in summer, fading to pink. Bark is cinnamon color in winter. This plant prefers afternoon shade, regular watering and more during hot summer spells. Prune in winter to promote new growth and tidy the plant. Large, dense 6 to 8 inch long clusters of white flowers are held upright above the dark green oak leaf-shaped foliage. Flowers become rose-pink in the fall and leaves turn deep red-bronze. Tan-brown exfoliat ...

Plant Height: 3-6', 6-12'
Flower Color: White
Attracts Wildlife: n/a
Leaf Color: Green
Flower Season: Summer



Botanical Name: *Impatiens X 'New Guinea'*

Common Name: New Guinea Impatiens

Plant Type: Perennial, Annual

Sun: Half, Shade

Water: High, Extra in Summer

These beautiful perennials will grow 1-2 ft. tall and wide. It has dark green foliage that may be variegated, depending on cultivar. Beautiful, 3" in diameter flowers in lavender, purple, pink, red, orange or white bloom in summer and fall. Can tolerate more sun than other *Impatiens* varieties. This plant does well with rich, well draining soil. Can be grown as a perennial in non-frost winter areas as it does not tolerate frost. Can be grown as an annual in all areas and maybe be grown indoors.

Plant Height: 1-3'

Flower Color: Lavender, Orange, Pink, Purple, Red, White

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Dark Green, Red, White, Variegated

Flower Season: Summer, Fall



Botanical Name: *Iris douglasiana*

Common Name: Douglas Iris

Plant Type: Perennial, Bulb

Sun: Half

Water: Medium, Extra in Summer

Douglas iris is an evergreen perennial that can reach 2' tall and spread 3' wide. It tolerates full sun in coastal areas but needs afternoon shade in warm inland valleys. Foliage is long, pointed and lovely green. It prefers rich soil. Not frost tolerant; does not tolerate gravel soil. Lavender blue flowers with lots of streaks appear in spring. Medium watering required. Beautiful when planted en masse under oak trees.

Plant Height: 1-3'

Flower Color: Blue, Lavender, Multi-Colored

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Green

Flower Season: Spring



Botanical Name: *Liriope gigantea*

Common Name: Giant Lily Turf

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Half, Shade

Water: Medium

Lush, dark green foliage is excellent for edging and borders in sometimes brightly shaded areas. Small white flowers among the foliage are followed by metallic violet-blue fruit. Evergreen perennial.

Plant Height: 1-3'

Flower Color: Blue

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Dark Green

Flower Season: Summer, Fall



Botanical Name: *Loropetalum chinense*

Common Name: Fringe Flower

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Medium, Extra in Summer

This attractive, evergreen, rounded shrub is 4-8' high and 6-8' wide. Foliage is 2" long, olive green. Branches are arching. A profusion of white fringed flowers in the spring bloom at the end of the branches. Looks great in containers. It tolerates full sun in cool climates but needs afternoon shade in warm inland valleys. It does best in acidic, rich, moist, well draining soil.

Plant Height: 6-12'

Flower Color: White

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Grey Green, Yellow Green

Flower Season: Spring



Botanical Name: *Mahonia aquifolium*

Common Name: Oregon Grape

Plant Type: Broadleaf Evergreen, Shrub

Sun: Full, Half, Shade

Water: Medium

Evergreen shrub grows upright to 6' tall, slowly creeping outward by rhizomes. Leaves are 4"-10" long, with 5-9 very spiny-toothed, 1.5" oval leaflets. New springtime growth turns copper-bronze tone, and fall foliage turns a deep reddish tone. Performs in sun or shade and looks best with regular water but is considered drought tolerant. Terminal clusters of bright-yellow, bell-shaped flowers are followed by clusters of blue, grape-like fruits loved by birds. Makes good jelly.

Plant Height: 3-6'

Flower Color: Yellow

Attracts Wildlife:

Leaf Color:

Flower Season: Spring



Botanical Name: *Myrtus communis*

Common Name: Common Myrtle

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Low

This evergreen shrub is 6' high and 5' wide with aromatic leaves. It blooms with white, sweet-scented flowers followed by bluish black berries. It can be grown in sun or partial shade; well drained soil is essential.

Plant Height: 3-6', 6-12', 12-25'

Flower Color: White

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Dark Green

Flower Season: Summer



Botanical Name: *Pieris japonica*

Common Name: Lily of the Valley Bush

Plant Type: Broadleaf Evergreen, Shrub

Sun: Shade

Water: Medium

Pieris japonica is an evergreen shrub with elegant foliage all year. It has upright, dense, tiered growth to 9'-10' tall. New growth is bronzy pink to red. Mature leaves are glossy green and 3" long. There are drooping clusters of white, pink, or nearly red flowers.

Plant Height: 3-6'

Flower Color: White

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Dark Green, Red

Flower Season: Spring



Botanical Name: *Rhamnus alaternus 'Variegata'*

Common Name: Variegated Italian Buckthorn

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Full, Half

Water: Low

This plant is an evergreen shrub grows to 6'-8' tall and wide. The leaves edged with creamy white. Remove the green shoots when they appear or else they will take over the plant. It needs little or no water.

Plant Height: 6-12'

Flower Color: n/a

Attracts Wildlife: n/a

Leaf Color: Dark Green, White, Variegated

Flower Season: n/a



Botanical Name: *Ribes viburnifolium*

Common Name: Catalina Evergreen Currant

Plant Type: Shrub

Sun: Half, Shade

Water: Low

Fragrant evergreen shrub grows 3' tall and 6'-10' wide, but can easily be kept smaller. Has red stems, red leaf venation, and small rose-colored flowers with red berries February to April. Scented dark green foliage exudes fragrance when brushed and has a waxy shine after it rains. Native to Santa Catalina Island and Baja California where it grows in shade to part shade. Grows with dry to moderate water as long as it has good drainage. Extremely drought tolerant in clay. Good ground cover for dry shade. Thrives under oaks.

Plant Height: 3-6'

Flower Color: Pink

Attracts Wildlife:

Leaf Color:

Flower Season: Spring



Botanical Name: *Rubus parviflorus*
Common Name: Western Thimbleberry
Plant Type: Shrub, Vine
Sun: Full, Half, Shade
Water: High

Western thimble-berry is an upright shrub, 1-5 ft. tall with gray, flaking bark; strong, flexible stems; large, shiny, maple-like, deciduous leaves; terminal clusters of white (sometimes pink-tinged) flowers; and red, raspberry-like fruit. It has raspberry-like fruits.

Plant Height: 3-6'
Flower Color: White
Attracts Wildlife: Birds, Butterflies, Wildlife
Leaf Color: Green
Flower Season: Spring, Summer



Botanical Name: *Sarcococca ruscifolia*
Common Name: Fragrant Sarcococca or Sweet Box
Plant Type: Shrub, Ground cover
Sun: Shade, Deep Shade
Water: Low, Medium

This small, slow-growing evergreen shrub reaches a height of about 4' with an equal spread. Its waxy leaves are 2" long with deep green with wavy edges. Small, white flowers are borne in late winter. This plant is highly fragrant, and should be grown in shaded areas.

Plant Height: 3-6'
Flower Color: White
Attracts Wildlife:
Leaf Color:
Flower Season: Winter, Spring

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