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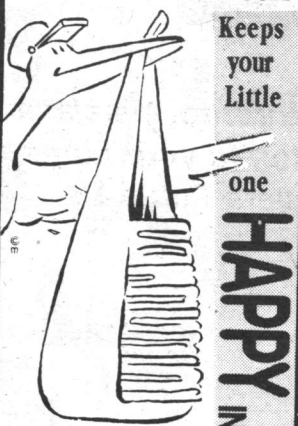
Wed. July 28/93  
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Bonus: 48  
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# Some tips on gardening in the shade

By Grace C. Lockwood

I apologize for being somewhat tardy with my articles but there doesn't seem to be enough time to do everything in the summer. I snatch every minute I can to spend out in the garden and still it threatens to overgrow me! My next couple of articles will be about gardening in the shade.

With the recent heat wave and sun warnings, we have been scrambling for shade. Having a shady lot doesn't mean a lack of plants. Indeed, a shaded garden can be a sophisticated oasis of textures and cool greens accented by color.

Large textured leaves of hostas combined with the delicate tracery of ferns and shade-tolerant evergreens create a lovely garden all season long. Color can be introduced in the form of variegated leaves and shade-loving flowers.

Impatiens may be

maligned and overused but they still look lovely peeping out from underneath hostas, and the pale blues, pinks and whites will light up a dark corner all summer long. White flowers look brighter if planted against blue-green leaves.

Most shade plants appreciate a slightly moist and humusy soil. However, a common problem under large shade trees such as maples and evergreens is dry, poor soil. The trees' feeder roots take all the available moisture and nutrients, leaving a very dry soil packed with roots. One way to combat this is by building a raised bed around the tree. Use a rich moisture retentive



## GARDEN GRACES

soil with lots of compost and leaf mold (mushed up, decomposed leaves). Do not build the soil up directly

against the trunk or you may smother the tree. The tree roots will eventually invade the raised bed but the plants will have three or four years to establish themselves and compete more successfully.

Another way to help retain moisture is by mulching the soil. Compost, chopped leaves and pine needles make a good cover and add nutrients to the soil as they break down. Maple leaves make the soil more alkaline while pine needles and oak leaves make it more acidic. Cocoa hulls, if available, exude a delightful chocolate

scent when wet.

Next article: Plants for shade gardens

### Tips for watering in the heat

Water in the early morning or later afternoon before 6 p.m., preferably in the morning. Do not water in the hot noon sun because water droplets act like magnifying glasses, reflecting the sun's rays and burning the leaves. A lot of water is lost to evaporation as well.

Watering in the evening doesn't give the soil a chance to absorb the moisture before dark or the leaves a chance to dry off. Moisture attracts earwigs and slugs and fungal diseases flourish in cool, damp night air. Hand watering takes more time but is more efficient than sprayers and gives you the chance to look at your plants more closely. Low misters and soaker hoses are also more water efficient than the high fan sprayers.



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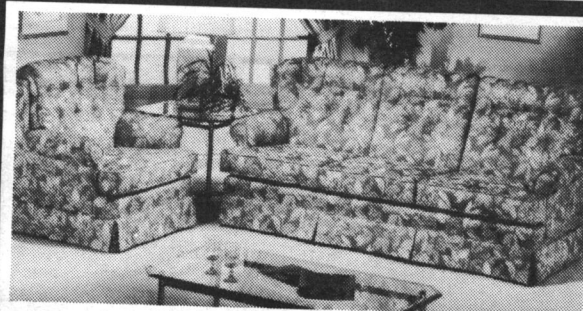
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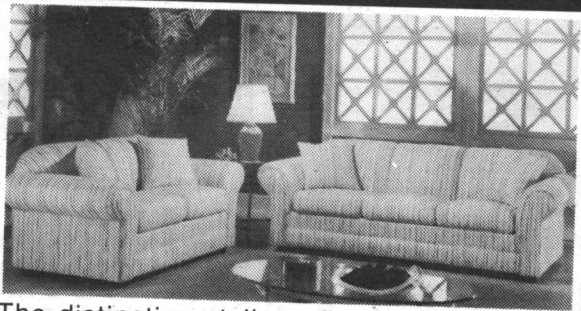
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