

Fill your lawn's shady areas

Wildflowers may be the perfect answer to a shady problem on your lot. They thrive on conditions that defeat many other types of flowers. And you may be surprised to find that many of the perennial plants available through garden centres are actually "tame" wildflowers, nearly identical to their cousins growing in natural areas. Columbine, Jacob's ladder, Creeping or blue Phlox, Bleeding hearts and Solomon's seal are just a few examples. You'll find they blend beautifully in a shady setting along with woodland favourites like Jack-in-the-pulpit, Foam flower, Trout lily and a wide range of ferns.

Don't be tempted to rush out, spade in hand, and dig plants out of the wilds, though. (Besides being illegal in many areas, it's unfriendly to wild plants and the environment).

Many nurseries and garden centres have special wildflower sections, and they can advise you on which plants will naturalize well in your garden conditions. When choosing and preparing a site for your wildflower garden, keep in mind the kind of natural habitat these plants prefer: moist, humus-rich soil in an area that has lightly dappled shade in the springtime when they're flowering, and more shade cover in late spring and summer to keep the habitat from drying out. Like most other plants, wildflowers will not survive in a very dark, compacted area.

If you're not sure which varieties to choose, try Pickseed® Wildflower Mix specially designed for either sun and shade.

Spend some time preparing a good deep bed with plenty of Green Earth® Premium Organic Compost mixed in, then plant in an informal pattern - wildflowers look best in groups as they would appear in the wild. Your new garden will fill out faster, bloom more abundantly and withstand stress better if you feed it regularly with a fertilizer like PINK™ All-Purpose Garden Food 8-12-6. This top quality organic-based blend contains all the nutrients needed by wildflowers for healthy growth.

How to keep wildlife from turning your new garden into a salad bar: It's not surprising that animals, birds and insects are attracted to the garden environment with all it has to offer. And many gardeners enjoy the increased level of wildlife activity a new garden brings. But how do you keep these creatures from dining out too heavily on your flowers and foliage?

Many perennials are naturally resistant to insects and animals: Due to their taste or poisonous nature, wildlife will avoid them. Here are some examples:

Resistant to deer & other animals: Astilbe, bleeding heart, columbine, daffodil, foxglove, iris, periwinkle, lavender, lungwort, sunflower.

Resistant to insects: Marigolds

Other controls: There are some quite effective animal repellents on the market that are worth trying, such as Green Earth® Animal Repellent. Green Earth® Insecticidal Soap can be used to control insect damage. As a general rule, use organic controls first... then conventional insect controls if necessary.

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