

Plant Selection References

Compiled by Mary Welch-Keesey, Consumer Horticulture Specialist, Purdue University 06/2006

BOOKS

The following books are by trusted authors and are applicable to the Midwest, though they may cover a larger area. Many have lists that you can use to narrow your search, once you know your specific site conditions. I'm sure there are many other books with valid information. Be especially careful of using books that are from Great Britain or the western US. The climate is drastically different from the one here in Indiana, and the information may or may not be applicable.

Woody Plants (trees and shrubs)

Manual of Woody Landscape Plants, 5th edition, Michael Dirr, Stipes Publishing 1998, ISBN 0-87563-800-7 – The indispensable reference. Lots of words, line drawings of leaves

Dirr's Hardy Trees and Shrubs, Michael Dirr, Timber Press 1997, ISBN 0-88192-404-0 – less words but color pictures, lists in the back

Landscape Plants for Eastern North America, 2nd edition, Harrison Flint, John Wiley and Sons, 1997, ISBN 0-471-59919-0 – Purdue Professor Emeritus. Good lists in back. Not extensive information but line drawings to show plant form and little grids to show sun/shade, wet/dry tolerance are useful.

Native Trees, Shrub, and Vines, William Cullina, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002, ISBN 0-618-09858-5 - Cullina is nursery manager and propagator at Garden in the Woods, the garden of the New England Wild Flower Society. The books (see below for herbaceous plants) are excellent with discussion about each genus, details of each species, including size, culture, and propagation. Excellence reference for detailed information on a large number of native plants.

Native Trees, Shrubs, and Vines for Urban and Rural American, Gary L. Hightshoe, John Wiley and Sons, 1988, ISBN 0-471-28879-9 – many tables to aid with plant selection, line drawings showing form.

Herbaceous Plants (perennials and annuals)

Growing and Propagating Wildflowers of the United States and Canada, William Cullina, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000, ISBN 0-395-96609-4, see above for info.

The Well-Tended Perennial Garden, Tracy DiSabato-Aust, Timber Press, 1998, ISBN 0-88192-414-8 – good information on taking care of perennials. Plant encyclopedia in back.

Manual of Herbaceous Ornamental Plants, Steven M. Still, Stipes Publishing, 1994, ISBN 0-87563-433-8 – Plant lists in back, perennials and annuals. New edition expected any time.

Books by Allan Armitage

Herbaceous Ornamental Plants, Allan Armitage, Stipes Publishing, 1997, ISBN 0-87563-723-X – the perennial plant equivalent to Dirr's Woody Plants book. Lots of detailed information, line drawings

Armitage's Garden Perennials, a Color Encyclopedia, Allan Armitage, Timber Press, 2000, ISBN 0-88192-435-0 – Fewer plants and information than book above but color photos, some plant lists

Armitage's Manual of Annuals, Biennials, and Half-Hardy Perennials, Allan Armitage, Timber Press, 2001, ISBN 0-88192-505-5 – Extensive information, line drawings, a few plant lists

Armitage's Native Plants for American Gardens, Allan Armitage, Timber Press, 2006, ISBN 0-88192-760-0 – New book, information looks good as much as I've had a chance to look at it. Plant lists in back, including plants less palatable to deer and rabbit.

Making the Most of Shade, Larry Hodgson, Rodale Books, Holtzbrinck Publishing, 2005, ISBN 1-57954-9675 – new book with some good information

Taylor's Guides - The books on Ornamental Grasses and Bulbs are good, various authors and dates, Houghton-Mifflin Company

WEBSITES

There's a lot of good information out there on the web, but there's a lot of questionable information as well. Err on the side of caution. University websites may provide the best information but may not list details on the newest cultivars. Botanical Garden websites are often excellent. Nursery websites may have valid information, but, if possible, double-check with another source. There are probably some excellent and accurate personal websites out there, but I'd trust them least. Always check the geographical location of the information source.

List of plants by Light Shade, Medium Shade, and Full Shade, as discussed in the presentation, from Morton Arboretum

<http://www.mortonarboretumphc.org/feature%20articles/Plant%20Selection/Plants%20for%20Shade%20Gardening%20%20May%202001.PDF>

Tree and shrub selection guide, also from Morton Arboretum

http://www.mortonarb.org/plantinfo/plantclinic/planttrees/plantclinic_planttrees.htm

<http://hort.ufl.edu/woody/> - University of Florida – Excellent information on plant selection and site analysis. See tree selector at <http://orb.at.ufl.edu/TREES/index.html>.

<http://www.hort.cornell.edu/uhi/outreach/recurbtree/index.html> - Recommended Urban Trees from Cornell. Includes site assessment checklist and plant lists

<http://plantfacts.osu.edu/Plant/> - Plant Facts Search, Ohio State University

<http://www.mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder/Alpha.asp> - Missouri Botanic Garden

<http://bestplants.chicago-botanic.org/> - Chicago Botanic Garden

<http://web1.msue.msu.edu/imp/modzz/masterzz.html> - Michigan State University

<http://www.sustland.umn.edu/plant/plantdata.asp> - University of Minnesota

<http://www.midwestlandscapeplants.org/> - University of Wisconsin

<http://woodyplants.nres.uiuc.edu/> - University of Illinois

<http://www.hort.uconn.edu/plants/> - University of Connecticut

<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/hort/courses/hort217/coursepages/homepage.htm> - Purdue University, information from the Woody Plants course