

## OUTSTANDING LANDSCAPE PLANTS FOR NORTHEAST TEXAS

Keith C. Hansen - Smith County Extension Horticulturist

This compilation of landscape plants for northeast Texas is intended to be used as a guide for selecting plants that are proven performers. Input for the list came from leading horticulturists, growers, gardeners and nurserymen from throughout the region. The following plants are hardy, reliable, lack major problems and are available in our area. There are many other good plants which also merit attention; not everyone's favorite will be on the list. However, you can be sure these will thrive in your landscape if given reasonable care. Photos of most plants can be viewed at:

<http://easttexasgardening.tamu.edu/> under Home Gardening/Landscape Plants section

Plants are listed alphabetically within categories by **common name**, followed by - (other common names), botanical name, light preference, evergreen or deciduous, along with comments regarding cultivars, special needs or attributes, and average landscape width. (**N**) = Native

Within some categories, some plant groups may have several outstanding members, such as hollies and oaks. A few species or varieties are listed to highlight some of the best in that group.

### **GROUNDCOVERS**

**Ajuga** - (Carpet Bugle); *Ajuga reptans*; partial shade to shade; 'Catlin's Giant', 'Chocolate Chip'

**Asiatic Jasmine** - *Trachelospermum asiaticum*; sun to shade; several cultivars – strong spreader, not for small areas

**English Ivy** - *Hedera helix*; shade; also a clinging vine; many cultivars. Not for painted surfaces; keep out of trees; can get out of control; not for small areas.

**Ferns** - several types. Evergreen: holly fern, autumn fern, tassel fern, Christmas fern; Deciduous: wood fern, Japanese painted fern; shade; 2' wide (some N)

**Juniper** - *Juniperus spp*; sun; several selections including: 'Blue Pacific', 'Bar Harbor', 'Blue Chip', 'Shore', 'Green Mound'; *J. procumbens* (Japanese garden juniper); 'Blue Rug'; 5' wide

**Liriope** - (Lily Turf); *Liriope muscari*; shade; several selections including: 'Majestic', 'Big Blue', 'Variegated'; 'Silvery Sunproof'; clumps 1' wide. *L. spicata*— strong spreading species.

**Mondo grass** - (Monkeygrass); *Ophiopogon japonicus*; partial shade to shade; cultivars include: 'Nanus' (dwarf), 'Nigrescens' (black)

**Pachysandra** - (Japanese Spurge); *Pachysandra terminalis*; shade. 'Green Sheen'

**Japanese Sweet Flag** – *Acorus graminus*; sun to shade; evergreen; slow spreader; 'Ogon', 'Oborouki'

**Sedum** – several types, sun to part shade; good for small areas.

**Golden Oregano** – *Oreganum vulgare* 'Aureum'; sun; evergreen; drought tolerant

## VINES - Perennial Types:

**Boston Ivy** - *Parthenocissus tricuspidata*; sun to partial shade; deciduous (N)

**Carolina Jessamine** - *Gelsemium sempervirens*; sun to partial shade; semi-evergreen (N)

**Clematis** - *Clematis spp.*; sun to partial shade; deciduous to semi-evergreen; many species & cultivars; keep roots cool, in shade, top in sun (some N such as *C. texana*)

**Coral Honeysuckle** - (Trumpet Honeysuckle); *Lonicera sempervirens*; sun to partial shade; evergreen (N)

**Crossvine** - *Bignonia capreolata*; sun to partial shade; semi-evergreen; 'Tangerine Beauty' (N)

**Fig Ivy** - (Climbing Fig); *Ficus pumila*; sun to partial shade; for painted surfaces; evergreen (foliage may burn in winter)

**Kadsura** – *Kadsura japonica*; sun to part shade; evergreen; green and variegated ('Fukurin') varieties; not common in trade

**Wisteria** - *Wisteria frutescens*; sun; deciduous (N); oriental types aggressive and not recommended

## VINES - Annual Types:

**Cardinal Climber; Hyacinth Bean; gourds; Mandevilla; Black-eyed Susan Vine (*Thunbergia alata*); Blue Skyflower (*Thunbergia grandiflora*)** – blooms late

## DWARF SHRUBS - (up to 4 feet) (some with occasional shearing)

**Autumn Sage** – *Salvia gregii*; sun; semi-evergreen; long summer blooming season; many cultivars (N)

**Azaleas** - *Rhododendron spp.*; morning sun to light shade; semi-evergreen; small types include Gumpo & some Satsuki varieties; 'Coral Bells', 'Watchet', 'Wakaebisu', 'Higasa', 'Autumn Embers', 'Autumn Chiffon', 3' - 4' wide

**Barberry (dwarf varieties)** - *Berberis spp.*; sun; deciduous to semi-evergreen; 'Crimson Pygmy', 'Kobold', *B. buxifolia* 'Nana'; 3' - 4' wide

**Boxwood** - *Buxus microphylla*; sun to partial shade; evergreen; 'Wintergreen', Japanese boxwood; 1' - 4' wide

**Chinese Fringe-Flower** – *Loropetalum chinense* 'Shang-lo' (Purple Pixie™); sun; evergreen. New very dwarf variety

**Dwarf Gardenia** - *Gardenia jasminoides* 'Radicans'; sun to part shade; evergreen; whiteflies occasionally a problem; 2' - 3' wide

**Holly** - *Ilex spp.*; sun to shade; evergreen; several excellent species and cultivars: *I. vomitoria* 'Nana', 'Schillings' (dwarf yaupon holly - N); *I. cornuta* - 'Carissa', 'Rotunda' (dwarf Chinese holly); *I. crenata* - 'Helleri', 'Compacta' (dwarf Japanese holly); 3'-5' wide

**Japanese Plum Yew** – *Cephalotaxus harringtonia* 'Prostrata'; part sun to shade; evergreen; 4' - 6' wide

**Junipers** - *Juniperus spp*; sun; evergreen; 'Tam Juniper'; 4' wide

**Indian Hawthorn** - *Rhaphiolepis indica*; sun; evergreen; 'Enchantress', 'Pinkie', 'Clara' and other dwarf varieties; 3' - 4' wide Note: Entomosporium leaf spot can be problem in shaded, moist locations.

**Dwarf Crape Myrtles** - *Lagerstroemia* (hybrid dwarf varieties); sun; deciduous; 'Pokomoke' and 'Chickasaw' newer hybrids resistant to powdery mildew; 3' wide

**Nandina** - *Nandina domestica* (dwarf varieties); sun to partial shade; evergreen; color is best in full sun; 'Harbour Dwarf', 'Gulf Stream', 'Firepower'; 2' wide

**Red Yucca** – *Hesperaloe parviflora*; sun; evergreen; clumps of dark green narrow leaves from this agave relative; 4' – 5' tall red flower spikes. Drought & heat tolerant. 3' wide

**Spirea** - *Spirea xbulmalda*, *S. japonica*; sun; deciduous; 'Shirobana', 'Goldflame', 'Goldmound', 'Lime Mound', 'Magic Carpet', 'Little Prince', 'Heather'; 2' - 3' wide

**Virginia Sweetspire** – *Itea virginica*; sun to part shade; semi-evergreen to deciduous; spreading by suckers with open growth habit; 'Henry's Garnet' 5' – 6' wide (N)

### MEDIUM SHRUBS (4 to 9 feet)

**Abelia** - (Glossy Abelia); *Abelia grandiflora*; sun to partial shade; semi-evergreen; 'Compacta', 'Edward Goucher', 'Sherwoodii', 'Francis Mason', 'Kaleidoscope', 'Hopely'; 4' – 6' wide

**Aucuba** - (Gold Dust Aucuba); *Aucuba japonica*; shade (no direct sun); evergreen; 'Variegata' (Gold Dust), 'Picturata'; 3' wide

**Azalea** - *Rhododendron spp.*; morning sun to shade; semi-evergreen or deciduous; many varieties; 3' - 8' wide

**Barberry** - (Japanese Barberry); *Berberis thunbergii*; sun; semi-evergreen; 'Atropurpurea', 'Rose Glow'; 4' - 5' wide

**Bridal Wreath** – *Spirea x vanhouttei*, *S. thunbergii*; sun to partial shade; deciduous; white flowers early spring; 5' – 10' wide

**Camellia** - *Camellia japonica*, *C. sasanqua*; partial sun; evergreen; hundreds of varieties; Sasanqua varieties bloom early winter, often escaping freeze damage, while Japanese camellias bloom mid to late winter and can suffer bloom damage unless in a protected location; 4' - 15' wide

**Chinese Fringe Bush** – *Loropetalum chinense* 'Purple Diamond'; sun; new variety with more compact growth habit; 4' – 5' wide

**Cleyera** - *Ternstroemia gymnanthera*; sun to partial shade; evergreen; 5' – 6' wide

**Crape Myrtle** - *Lagerstroemia indica*; semi-dwarf varieties; sun; deciduous; range of sizes, colors; look for newer hybrid, intermediate sizes with powdery mildew resistance; 5'- 12' wide

**Fatsia** – *Fatsia japonica*; shade; evergreen; bold texture; 6' – 10' wide

**Holly** - *Ilex cornuta*; sun; evergreen; 'Dwarf Burford', 'Berries Jubilee', 'Dazzler'; 'Needle Point'; 4' - 8' wide depending on variety

**Hydrangea** – Bigleaf Hydrangea - *Hydrangea macrophylla*; **Oakleaf Hydrangea** - *H. quercifolia*;

partial shade; deciduous; 4' – 8' wide

**Indian Hawthorn** - *Rhaphiolepis indica*; sun; evergreen; several cultivars; Note: Entomosporium leaf spot can be problem in shaded, moist locations. 4' - 6' wide

**Juniper** - *Juniperus spp*; sun; evergreen; 'Compact Pfitzer', 'Sea Green', 'Blue Vase', 'Blue Point', 'Pfitzer', others; 6' - 9' wide

**Leatherleaf Mahonia** – *Mahonia bealei*; shade; upright growth; attractive yellow flowers and blue fruit; 3' 4' wide

**Nandina** - *Nandina domestica*; sun to partial shade; evergreen; 3' - 4' wide

**Roses** – *Rosa spp.* sun; semi-evergreen; shrub type; 'Knockout' and related varieties & Earth-Kind selections with disease resistance; 4'-6' wide

**Texas Sage** - (Ceniza); *Leucophyllum frutescens*; sun; evergreen; several cultivars; 4' wide (N)

### **LARGE SHRUBS (over 9 feet) – (some good candidates for screening)**

**Althea (Rose of Sharon)** – *Hibiscus syriacus*; sun to partial shade; deciduous; old fashioned favorite with many colors; 6' – 10' wide

**Banana Shrub** - *Michelia figo*; partial shade; evergreen; highly fragrant flowers; 6' – 10' wide

**Camellia** - *Camellia japonica*, *C. sasanqua*; partial sun; evergreen; hundreds of varieties; Sasanqua varieties bloom early winter, often escaping freeze damage, while Japanese camellias bloom mid to late winter and can suffer bloom damage unless in a protected location; 4' - 15' wide

**Cherry Laurel** - *Prunus caroliniana*; compact variety available ('Bright 'n Tight', 'Compacta' 8' to 10' tall); sun to partial shade; evergreen; can grow into small tree; 14' - 16' wide (N)

**Chinese Fringe Shrub** – *Loropetalum chinense*; sun; evergreen; rubrum varieties (many) with reddish-purple foliage and pink flowers; old-fashioned variety has green leaves and white flowers; can grow up to 15' tall; up to 8' wide

**Crape Myrtle** - *Lagerstroemia spp*; sun; deciduous; hybrid varieties with mildew resistance; 8' - 10' wide

**Elaeagnus** - *Elaeagnus spp*; sun to partial shade; evergreen; 'Ebbingei', 'Fruitlandii'; 5' – 10' wide

**Holly** - *Ilex spp*; several types; sun; evergreen; 'Nellie R. Stevens', 'Foster's', 'Savannah', 'Needlepoint'; Yaupon, 'Festive' and other "Red Holly" varieties"; 6' - 15' wide (depending on variety)

**Japanese Yew** - *Podocarpus macrophylla*; sun to shade; evergreen; 8' wide

**Juniper** - *Juniperus spp*; sun; evergreen; many cultivars including 'Skyrocket', 'Blue Point', 'Hollywood'; 6' - 8' wide

**Photinia, Chinese** - *Photinia serrulata*; sun; evergreen; can grow into small tree; 10' - 15' wide

**Southern Wax Myrtle** - *Myrica cerifera*; sun to partial shade; evergreen; 8' - 12' wide (N)

### **SMALL TREES (under 25 feet)**

**Crape Myrtle** - *Lagerstroemia* spp; sun; deciduous; comes in many sizes and forms; hybrids, many with Indian names have powdery mildew resistance, attractive bark, showy blooms; 15' - 20' wide

**Dogwood** - *Cornus florida*; partial sun; deciduous; white and pink varieties; well-drained acid soil; give protection from full sun, difficult to establish; 15' - 20' wide (N)

**Fringetree** - (Grancy Greybeard); *Chionanthus virginicus*; also *C. retusus* - Chinese Fringetree; sun to partial shade; deciduous; acid soil; 15' wide (N)

**Holly** - *Ilex* spp; sun to shade; Yaupon Holly, *I. vomitoria* (evergreen); Possum Haw or Deciduous Holly, *I. decidua* (deciduous); only female plants bear fruit; 10' wide (both N)

**Japanese Black Pine** - *Pinus thunbergiana*; sun; evergreen; 25' wide

**Japanese Maple** - *Acer palmatum*, *A. japonicum*; partial sun to high shade; deciduous; many cultivars with different forms, most with dramatic fall color; 10' - 15' wide

**Magnolia: (deciduous types)**; sun to part shade; Saucer or Tulip Magnolia - *M. soulangiana*; Star Magnolia - *M. stellata*; and *M. hybrids*; (Little Girl cultivars); (**evergreen type**): *M. grandiflora* 'Little Gem' – very compact variety (N); 15' wide

**Mexican Plum** – *Prunus mexicana*; sun; deciduous; (N)

**Redbud** - *Cercis canadensis*; sun; deciduous; 'Oklahoma', 'Forest Pansy'; 'Avondale' (*C. chinensis*); 15' - 25' wide (N)

**Vitex** - (Lavender Tree); *Vitex agnus-castus*; sun; deciduous; lilac blooms; 15' wide

### **MEDIUM TREES (25 to 50 feet)**

**American Holly** - *Ilex opaca*; sun to shade; evergreen; slow to moderate growth; only female plants bear fruit; 15' - 20' wide (N)

**Cedar Elm** – *Ulmus crassifolia*; sun; deciduous; tolerates drought, heavy soils; 40' – 60' wide (N)

**Chinese Pistache** - *Pistacia chinensis*; sun; deciduous; reliable fall color; Texas SuperStar; 30' - 40' wide

**Crabapple** - *Malus* spp; sun; deciduous; 20 to 25 feet; select disease resistant cultivars; 25' wide

**Crape Myrtle** – *Lagerstroemia*; Several cultivars attain heights of 25 – 30' tall; look for hybrid varieties (many with Indian tribe names) with resistance to powdery mildew. 20' – 30' wide

**Lacebark Elm** - *Ulmus parvifolia*; sun to partial shade; deciduous; attractive bark; 35' - 50' wide

**Magnolia** - *Magnolia* spp; sun to partial shade; some *M. grandiflora* (**Southern Magnolia**) cultivars stay small (N); *M. x soulangiana* (**Saucer or Tulip Magnolia**); 15' - 40' wide

**Maple, Red** - *Acer rubrum*; sun; deciduous; beautiful fall color; 25' - 30' wide

**Maple, other species** - *Acer barbatum* (Texas Sugar Maple) (N), *A. leucoderme* (Chalk Maple) (N); *A. truncatum* (Shantung Maple); deciduous; sun; 25' - 30' wide

### **LARGE TREES (over 50 feet)**

**Bald Cypress** - *Taxodium distichum*; sun; deciduous; tolerates wet soils; similar species – *T. ascendens* (Pond Cypress) & *T. mucronatum* (Monterrey Cypress); 30' - 40' wide (N)

**Blackgum** - *Nyssa sylvatica*; sun; deciduous; fall color; tolerates wet soils, slow growing; 30' wide (N)

**Ginkgo** - *Ginkgo biloba*; sun; deciduous; slow growing, brilliant yellow fall color; look for male (fruitless) varieties; 40' wide

**Maple** - *Acer rubrum*; sun; deciduous; Red Maple most common, Trident Red Maple and Drummond Red Maple frequently grown; *A. barbatum* - Southern Sugar Maple; 25' - 30' wide (N)

**Oaks** - *Quercus spp.*; sun; many species - among highest rated are: Shumard Red Oak, *Q. shumardii* (deciduous); Live Oak, *Q. virginiana* (evergreen); Willow Oak, *Q. phellos* (deciduous); White Oak, *Q. alba* (deciduous); 40' - 70' wide (N)

**Pecan** - *Carya illinoensis*; sun; deciduous; can be messy; look for recommended varieties; consider native, ungrafted trees; 40' - 60' wide (N)

**River Birch** - *Betula nigra*; sun; deciduous; attractive peeling bark; 'Heritage' and improved variety; 30' – 60' wide (N)

**Southern Magnolia** - *Magnolia grandiflora*; sun to partial shade; evergreen; drops leaves all year; turf doesn't grow underneath; consider leaving branches full to the ground; 30' - 50' wide (N)

**Sweetgum** - *Liquidamber styraciflua*; sun; deciduous; 'Rotundiloba' is a fruitless variety; 30' – 50' wide (N)

**Tulip Poplar** - (Yellow Poplar); *Liriodendron tulipifera*; sun; deciduous; fast-growing; gets very large, needs room and good drainage; not for small properties; 30' - 50' wide (N)

*Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin. 4/13*