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Ornamental Shrubs for Central and South Texas



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
J. E. Hutchison, Director, College Station, Texas

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ORNAMENTAL SHRUBS

FOR

CENTRAL & SOUTH TEXAS

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The following list of landscape plants is intended as a reference and guide for planting throughout the area shown on the map. It is designed primarily for the home gardener, nurseryman or landscape designer in Central and South Texas. It does not include many plants that are better adapted to northern gardens or others that are limited to the Gulf Coast by hardiness requirements.

Plants are classified according to optimum size or as a ground cover or vine. Descriptions are necessarily brief, but should help determine their general appearance and use. All plants are considered evergreen unless it is noted that they are deciduous.

Some new variety introductions are included, primarily those coming to us from California.

VINES

Antigonon leptopus—Coralvine, Queens Wreath: rapid climber from tuber; tendrils; bright pink flowers, sun, semi-shade, summer, deciduous.

Bignonia capreolata—Crossvine: climbs with tendrils clinging by discs, flowers white to yellow, semi-shade.

Campsis radicans—Trumpet creeper: climbing by aerial rootlets, orange trumpet-shaped blooms, vigorous grower, sun, deciduous.

Clematis spp.—Clematis: lush compound leaves,

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tendrils, colorful white, pink, lavender, or red blooms, summer, fall; sun, semi-shade, deciduous.

Doxantha unguis-cati—Cats-claw: climbing by claw-like tendrils; dense foliage, bright trumpet-shaped yellow flowers, spring; semi-shade.

Ficus pumila (repens)—Climbing Fig: small to variable-sized leaves, clinging by holdfasts; sun, semi-shade; avoid north and west winter exposure.

Gelsemium sempervirens—Carolina Jessamine: twining, glossy green foliage, trumpet-shaped yellow flowers, early spring to summer; sun, semi-shade.

Hedera canariensis—Algerian Ivy: climbs by holdfasts, large leathery leaves green or variegated to creamy white, semi-shade; avoid north and west winter exposure.

Hedera helix—English Ivy: as above, but smaller leaves and hardier.

Lonicera heckrottii—Coral Honeysuckle: twining climber, oval leaves, honeysuckle flowers of coral red and yellow, summer; sun, deciduous.

Lonicera japonica halliana—Halls Japanese Honeysuckle: twining climber, fragrant white to yellow flowers, spring, summer, sun.

Lonicera japonica purpurea—Purple Japanese Honeysuckle: vigorous twining climber, purple-tinted green foliage, coral-red and yellow flowers, spring, summer, sun.

Parthenocissus tricuspidata lowii—Lows Boston Ivy: vigorous, clinging by holdfasts, small compound leaves, turns bright red in fall, semi-shade; deciduous.

Passiflora caerulea—Bluecrown Passionflower: fast growing by tendrils, trilobed green leaves, large white-pink with purple crown flowers, summer; sun, semi-shade.

Polygonum aubertii—Silverlace vine: hardy twining slender stemmed vine, clusters of tiny greenish-white flowers spring and fall; sun, deciduous.

Rosa banksiae—Lady Banksia, Yellow or White: weaving, dark green foliage, few spines or none, white and yellow miniature double rose blooms, spring; sun.

Trachelospermum asiaticum—Japanese Star Jasmine (Asian Jasmine): small showy green, sometimes variegated, foliage on twining stems, white flowers rare in spring, summer; sun, shade.

Trachelospermum jasminoides—Confederate Jasmine (Chinese Star Jasmine): as above, but more vigorous, larger deeper green leathery leaves, fragrant star-shaped white flowers, spring; sun, shade.

Wisteria spp.—Wisteria: vigorous twining woody vine, compound leaves, violet, white, or pink pendant flower spikes, spring; sun, deciduous.

GROUND COVERS

Ajuga reptans—Carpet Bugle: showy, whorled green, purple or variegated green-yellow leaves hugging ground; violet-blue, rarely white spiked flowers, spring, early summer; semi-shade, shade.

Euonymus fortunei—Wintercreeper Euonymus: prostrate branched, dark green or variegated green-white leaves, summer, plum-color fall, winter; sun, semi-shade.

Festuca glauca—Blue Fescue: dwarf clumped blue-green grass 8–12 inches in mounds, sun.

Gelsemium sempervirens—Carolina Jessamine: description in vine list; covers to 12 inches deep, semi-shade.

Hedera canariensis—Algerian Ivy: description in vine list; forms thicker mat than *H. helix*.

Hedera helix and varieties—English Ivy: description in vine list; more varieties of this species adaptable as ground covers.

Iberis sempervirens—Evergreen Candytuft: tiny leaves, mounding form, flat heads of small white blooms, spring; sun, semi-shade.

Lantana camara—Lantana: thickly branched compact spreading green foliage, masses of blooms intermittently throughout year, orange-yellow, pink, white, sun.

Liriope muscari—*Liriope* (Big Blue, Christmas Tree, White, Variegated): blade-like dark green foliage from bulblets, violet or white flower spikes, semi-shade.

Lonicera japonica chinensis—Purple Honeysuckle: description in vine list; heavy matted cover, sun.

Lonicera japonica halliana—Halls Honeysuckle: description in vine list; heavy matted cover, sun.

Ophiopogon japonicum—Lily Turf: fine-bladed grass-like foliage, sod-forming habit; light lilac flowers, summer, semi-shade.

Potentilla verna—Spring Cinquefoil: dainty fine leaf, ground hugging; attractive small yellow blooms, spring; sun, semi-shade.

Santolina chamaecyparissus—Santolina: low, dense, whitish-gray foliage, aromatic; showy button-like gold flowers, summer; sun, dry sites.

Santolina virens—Green Santolina: as above, but bright green foliage.

Sasa pygmaea—Pigmy Bamboo: dwarf spreading green feathery bamboo foliage; sun, semi-shade.

Trachelospermum (Rhynchospermum) asiaticum—Asian Jasmine: description in vine list; versatile dense low cover; sun, shade.

Trachelospermum jasminoides—Confederate Jasmine: description in vine list; deeper cover than above, faster growing; sun, shade.

Vinca major—Vinca: dark green or variegated white and green foliage, loose cover; colorful purple flowers, summer; semi-shade, shade.

Vinca minor—Running Myrtle: small dark green foliage, closer cover than above; white or purple flowers, summer; semi-shade, shade.

DWARF SHRUBS — 1 TO 3 FEET

Abelia grandiflora postrata—Dwarf Abelia: shiny small leaves, red tinge, white flowers, sun.

Aspidistra elatior—Aspidistra, Cast-Iron Plant: large oblong leaves from tough rootstocks, shade, semi-shade.

Azalea (Rhododendron) obtusum japonicum—Kurume Azalea (Hinodegeri, Snow, Chimes, Hexe, Coral Bells, Pink Pearl, others): green foliage, masses of red through pink to white blooms, spring, semi-shade, acid humus soil.

Berberis thunbergii atropurpurea nana—Crimson Pigmy Barberry: crimson foliage, sun, deciduous.

Cotoneaster horizontalis—Rock Cotoneaster: small round leaves, pink flowers, red berries, sun.

Cuphea hyssopifolia—False Heather: compact, small leaves, small violet-white flowers, semi-shade.

Euonymus pulchellus—Boxleaf Euonymus: dark green, small leaves, small violet-white flowers, semi-shade.

Euonymus pulchellus variegatus—Variegated Boxleaf Euonymus: As above.

Gardenia radicans—Dwarf Gardenia: glossy green foliage, white fragrant flowers, semi-shade.

Hesperaloe parviflora—Red Yucca: yucca-like foliage, spikes of pink blooms, sun.

Hypericum moserianum—St. John's Wort, Gold Flower: pendant branches, light green leaves, showy yellow blooms, summer, semi-shade.

Hypericum patulum henryi—Henry's Hypericum: As above, but better bloomer.

Iberis sempervirens—Evergreen Candytuft: heads of white blooms, spring, sun, semi-shade.

Ilex cornuta rotunda—Dwarf Chinese Holly: glossy holly foliage, dense, no berries, shade or sun.

Ilex cornuta rotunda burfordii—Dwarf Burford Holly: Glossy single-spined foliage, shade or sun, bright red berries. Attractive.

Ilex vomitoria nana—Dwarf Yaupon Holly: compact, small leaves, rarely berries, semi-shade, sun.

Juniperus horizontalis and varieties—Creeping Juniper (Bar Harbor, Andorra, Webberi, Wiltoni): prostrate growth, spreading foliage, sun.

Juniperus procumbens—Procumbens Juniper (Dwarf Japgarden, Variegated Procumbens): As above, hugs the ground, sun.

Juniperus sabina—Savin Juniper: spreading, vase-shaped foliage, sun.

Juniperus sabina tamariscifolia—Tamarix Juniper: As above, blue-green foliage, sun.

Lavandula officinalis—Lavender: compact, aromatic gray foliage, lavender flowers, sun.

Myrtus communis compacta—Dwarf True Myrtle: compact, small glossy leaves, creamy white flowers, semi-shade.

Nandina domestica nana—Dwarf Nandina: compact mounded form, spring and summer foliage green, fall and winter foliage scarlet, sun.

Pittosporum tobira—Wheelers' Dwarf Pittosporum: Like *P. tobira*, but convenient dwarf habit. A new variety.

Rosemarinus officinalis—Rosemary: prostrate, mounding, aromatic green foliage, blue flower spikes, spring, sun.

Santolina chamaecyparissus—Lavender Cotton: dense, aromatic whitish gray foliage, button-like gold flowers, summer, drier sites, sun.

Santolina virens—Green Lavendercotton: As above, but with deep green foliage.

Sasa pygmaea—Pigmy Bamboo: feathery deep green foliage, spreading, semi-shade, sun.

Teucrium chamaedrys—Germander: spreading, glossy, dark green leaves, purple flowers, summer, drier sites, sun, semi-shade.

Yucca filamentosa—Adams needle: sword-shaped bluish leaves, spike of creamy white blooms summer, sun.

SMALL SHRUBS — 3 TO 5 FEET

Abelia grandiflora—Glossy Abelia: shiny small leaves, red-tinged white bell-shaped flowers, vigorous, sun.

Abelia Goucher—Edward Goucher Abelia: as above, but with dainty pink flowers.

Aucuba japonica and varieties—Aucuba (Gold Dust, Picturata, Dwarf Female): showy large leaves, some with golden yellow-tinged leaves, red berries, shade.

Berberis thunbergii atropurpurea—Red Leaf Japanese Barberry: compact bronze-red foliage, full sun, deciduous.

Buxus harlandi—Korean Boxwood: shiny small foliage, compact, shears well, sun, semi-shade.

Buxus japonica—Japanese Boxwood: as above, light green foliage.

Buxus sempervirens—English Boxwood: as above, darker green.

Chaenomeles japonica—Flowering Quince: Thorny, round leaves, showy red to white blooms, early spring, sun, deciduous.

Cleyera japonica—Cleyera: polished reddish-green leaves, acid soil, semi-shade.

Cotoneaster glaucophylla—Grayleaf Cotoneaster: small gray-green leaves on arching branches, red berries, sun, semi-shade.

Cytisus racemosus (*Genista*)—Broom: erect, long slender stems, tiny leaves; sprays of yellow, red, purple or white blooms early spring.

Dasylirion texanum—Sotol: short-trunked, narrow long leaves forming a yucca-like head. Tall spike of white flowers, sun.

Deutzia crenata—Deutzia: graceful, double pink flowers, versatile, sun, deciduous.

Gardenia jasminoides fortuniana—Fortune Gardenia: waxy green foliage, double white fragrant blossoms, spring and fall, acid soil, sun, semi-shade.

Gardenia jasminoides 'Mystery'—Mystery Gardenia: as above, less frequent, but larger blooms.

Heteropteris argentea—Redwing: showy small yellow flowers followed by reddish maple-like winged fruit, sun, semi-shade, deciduous.

Hydrangea macrophylla—Hydrangea: large serrated leaves, showy pink or blue blossom cluster, acid soil, semi-shade, deciduous.

Jasminum floridum—Italian Jasmine: arching branches, showy small yellow blooms, sun, semi-evergreen.

Ligustrum japonicum Suwanee River—Suwanee River Ligustrum: compact dark green foliage, shears well, sun, semi-shade.

Mahonia aquifolium—Oregon grape: Hollylike foliage, yellow flowers spring, blue berries, sun, semi-shade.

Nandina domestica—Nandina: (Heavenly Bamboo). Attractive, low-growing, many upright stems display lacy green leaves; brilliant red in autumn.

Osmanthus heterophyllus variegatus — Variegated False Holly: Holly-like, spiny leaves, dark green edged with creamy white, semi-shade.

Prunus glandulosa—Flowering Almond: small, double pink flowers, spring, sun, deciduous.

Punica granatum nana—Dwarf Pomegranate: compact, orange-red flowers, summer, ornamental orange fruit, fall. Sun, deciduous.

Pyracantha koidzumii—Santa Cruz Pyracantha: Prostrate habit, small white flower clusters spring, red berries fall, sun.

Pyracantha crenato-serrata (dwarf)—Dwarf Pyracantha (Tiny Tim, Red Elf): dwarf, mounding habit, white bloom spring, red berries fall, sun.

Raphiolepis indica—Indian Hawthorne: glossy green compact foliage, rose pink flower clusters, early spring until summer; sun, semi-shade.

Spiraea bumalda—Dwarf Pink Bridal Wreath: narrow green leaves, erect plant, flat heads of rosy-pink flowers, summer, sun, deciduous.

Virburnum burkwoodii—Burkwood Virburnum: dark green leaves, waxy pinkish-white flower clusters, spring, semi-shade.

Viburnum japonicum — Japanese Viburnum: glossy green leaves, fragrant white flowers, spring, semi-shade.

Viburnum suspensum — Sandankwa Viburnum: large, oval leaves, fragrant rose-white blooms, spring, semi-shade.

Viburnum tinus robustum—Roundleaf Viburnum: light green pointed leaves, pink-tinged white blooms, spring, semi-shade.

MEDIUM SHRUBS — 6 TO 9 FEET

Aralia sieboldii—Fatsia, Aralia: large, maple-shaped leaves, tropical effect, partial shade.

Azalea (Rhododendron) indicum—Indica Azalea (Formosa, Pride of Mobile): light green foliage, showy single or double blooms, lavender, red, pink to white, spring, sun, semi-shade, acid, well-drained soil.

Berberis julianae—Wintergreen Barberry: holly-like leathery spiny-toothed foliage, sun, partial shade.

Camellia japonica—Camellia: leathery leaves, showy anemone to peony-like blooms, red through variegated red pink to white colors, fall to spring; acid well-drained soil, semi-shade.

Camellia sasanqua—Sasanqua: smaller leaves than above. Red to white blooms single to peony form, fall, sun, acid soil, semi-shade.

Cortaderia selloana—Pampasgrass: grass with heavily-serrated leaf blades, white plumes, fall, sun.

Cotoneaster pannosa—Silverleaf Cotoneaster: small silver-gray leaves, white flowers spring, red berries fall and winter, sun.

Cotoneaster parneyi—Red Clusterberry: larger dark green leaves, flowers and berries as above, sun.

Elaeagnus fruitlandii—Silverberry: rounded leaves, white and brown scales underside, silver-brown berries, sun.

Euonymus japonicus and varieties—Evergreen Euonymus (Golden, Gold Spot, Silver King, Silver Queen): upright growth, shiny deep green to variegated white or yellow, sun.

Fatshedera lizei—Botanical Wonder, Fatshedera: semi-climbing vine or shrub, large glossy ivy-like leaves, semi-shade, shade.

Feijoa sellowiana—Pineapple Guava: gray-green foliage, waxy white flowers with red centers, edible green fruit, sun.

Forsythia intermedia spectabilis—Golden Bell: brilliant yellow flowers before foliage, early spring, sun, deciduous.

Hibiscus syriacus—Althea, Rose of Sharon: upright, profusion of single or double red, pink, lavender or white hibiscus-shaped blooms, sun, deciduous.

Ilex cornuta—Chinese Horned Holly: dense, spiny holly-like leaves, red berries fall and winter, sun.

Ilex cornuta burfordii—Burford Holly: as above, but leaves not spiny.

Ilex aquipernyi—Brilliant Holly: long serrated leaves, bright red berries fall and winter, sun.

Jasminum mesnyi—Primrose Jasmine: vine-like, rich green stems and leaves, showy double yellow flowers, sun, semi-evergreen.

Juniperus chinensis pfitzeriana—Pfitzer juniper: feathery, gray-green sharp needled foliage, spreading form, sun.

Juniperus chinensis—many cultivars (Blue Vase, Hetz, Keteleeri, Mint Julip, Torulosa, etc.): compact, various forms, upright, artistic, green to blue green foliage, sun.

Lagerstroemia indica “dwarf” — Dwarf Crepe Myrtle: shrub form, green foliage, bronze tint when new, profusion of red, orchid, pink, white blooms, summer; sun, deciduous.

Leucophyllum frutescens—Senisa: small silver-gray foliage, orchid-pink, also white or wine, bell-like blooms, summer; sun, drought resistant.

Ligustrum texanum—Wax Ligustrum: glossy green heavy-textured leaves, white blooms, spring; shears well, sun.

Mahonia bealei—Leatherleaf Mahonia: stout, erect stems, blue-green foliage, fragrant yellow flowers, late spring, blue-black grape-like fruit; semi-shade.

Mahonia trifoliolata—Agarita: native, spiny pale green leaves, yellow blooms, spring, sun.

Myrtus communis—True Myrtle: compact small shiny green leaves, creamy white flowers, spring, semi-shade.

Osmanthus fragrans—Sweet Olive: dark green foliage, upright, fragrant tiny white flowers, spring, semi-shade.

Osmanthus heterophyllus—False Holly: holly-like spring leaves, compact upright, semi-shade.

Pittosporum tobira—Pittosporum: shiny green leaves, fragrant white flowers, spring, sun, semi-shade.

Pittosporum tobira variegata—Variegated Pittosporum: as above, with white variegated leaves, not as vigorous, winter burns easier.

Philodendron selloum—Split Leaf Philodendron: Tropical foliage, deeply lobed large green, semi-shade, shade; protect from heavy freezes.

Photinia glabra—Red Top Photinia: bronzy green foliage on spreading upright plant, stems and new foliage red; acid soil.

Pyracantha fortuneana—Pyracantha (Graber's, Rosedale, Victory): vigorous upright thorny, small leaves, clustered white blooms spring, red berries fall and winter; sun; avoid poorly drained subsoil.

Raphiolepis umbellata (ovata)—Yeddo Hawthorne: rounded foliage, spreading habit, fragrant white flowers, spring, sun, semi-shade.

Rhus sempervirens (virens)—Evergreen Sumac: native, glossy green leaves, reddish stems, small red fruit fall, sun, semi-shade.

Spiraea vanhouttei—Vanhoutte Spirea: blue green leaves on arching branches, display of white blooms, spring, deciduous.

Viburnum odoratissimum—Sweet Viburnum: large, lustrous leathery leaves, white fragrant flowers, spring to summer, sun, semi-shade.

Weigela florida—Weigelia: deep green foliage, vigorous; masses of pink flowers, spring; sun, deciduous.

Xylosma senticosa—Shiny Xylosma: glossy light green red-tinted foliage, upright, shears well, sun, semi-shade.

LARGE SHRUBS—SMALL TREES —

10 FEET PLUS

Cassia corymbosa—Flowery Senna: small dark compound-leaved legume, attractive yellow blooms, summer, sun, semi-shade.

Diospyros texana—Texas Persimmon: small obovate leaves, attractive gray bark; female has edible black fruit, sun, lime soils.

Eriobotrya japonica—Loquat: large dark green leaves, small clusters white blooms, fall, winter, yellow edible fruit, spring.

Ilex cassine—Cassine Holly: small oblong leaves, ascending habit, opaque red berries fall, winter, sun, topiary quality. (Note: On all hollies listed, only the female has berries.)

Ilex decidua—Possumhaw: native holly noted for profusion of berries—fall, winter; sun, semi-shade, deciduous.

Ilex opaca—American Holly (East Palatka, Hume): typical holly leaf, red berries fall, winter; semi-shade, acid soil.

Ilex cassine X *opaca*—Foster Holly: small serrated leaf, ascending habit, opaque red berries, fall, winter, topiary or standard, sun.

Ilex vomitoria—Yaupon Holly: native holly, small fringed leaf, bright red berries, fall, winter, versatile, sun.

Ilex altaclarensis—Wilson's Holly: large holly-like leaf, bright berries, bold appearance.

Juniperus virginiana—many cultivars (Canaert Redcedar, Burk, Hillspire, Manhattan Blue): compact dark green to blue-green foliage, pyramidal conifer, sun.

Juniperus scopulorum—many cultivars (Blue Haven, Blue Spire, Silver King, etc.): similar to above, but more variable in form, sun.

Lagerstroemia indica—Crepe Myrtle: green late foliage, outstanding large clusters of red, pink, orchid or white blooms, sun, deciduous.

¹*Ligustrum lucidum*—Glossy Privet: large dark green foliage, upright habit, white blooms, late spring, sun.

Nerium oleander—Oleander: erect, densely-stemmed with narrow leathery leaves, single or double blooms of red, pink, cream or white, summer; sun; winter burns from severe freezes.

Philadelphus virginalis—Mock Orange: slender branched upright, white fragrant flowers, spring; sun, deciduous.

Photinia arbutifolia macrocarpa—Catalina Holly: large green leaves, masses of red berries, resembles arbutus, sun.

Photinia "Fraseri"—Frazer Photinia: hybrid, mildew resistant; combines qualities of *P. glabra* and *P. serrulata*, sun.

Photinia serrulata—Chinese Photinia: large roughly serrated green leaves; white clusters of blooms, spring, red berries, fall; sun.

Photinia serrulata nova—As above, but smoother leaves and more compact.

Podocarpus macrophylla—Yew Podocarpus: tall columnar conifer, densely arranged yew-like leaves; sun.

Prunus caroliniana—Cherry laurel: bright green foliage, upright, dense, clusters of white spring blooms, sun, acid well-drained soil.

Prunus laurocerasus—English Cherry laurel: similar to above, sun or shade.

Sophora secundiflora—Mescalbean Sophora (Texas Mountain laurel): native to Edwards Plateau, compound dark green leaves; violet-blue pea-shaped flower clusters, spring; sun.

Thuja orientalis—Arborvitae (many cultivars): generally pyramidal, dense, soft scale-like foliage, dark green to golden; sun.

¹This is known in the nursery trade as *L. japonicum*, Japanese Ligustrum, and is a twist of the botanical names between this species and *L. japonicum*, Waxleaf, the smaller of the two. Authority: L. H. Bailey, 1968, *Manual of Cultivated Plants*, Macmillan Co. N.Y.

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