

## Cover for shaded areas

*What is an attractive, green vegetative cover for a shady, wooded area? Wildflowers and turfgrass aren't taking.*

—ILLINOIS

Reports indicate that under heavy shade, where less than 25 percent of the daily available sunlight is reaching an area, it is difficult to establish and maintain turfgrass.

Several turfgrass cultivars adapt well to shade, but you have to determine the amount and duration of shade. In the North, several Kentucky bluegrass cultivars, such as Bristol, Glade, Nugget, Touchdown and Birka have show good establishment under less than 70 percent shade. These cultivars would do better with more light. In areas with between 70-80 percent shade, tall fescues and fine fescues have shown good establishment. Consider using some improved turf-type tall fescues such as Rebel II, Falcon, Mustang, Arid, Jaguar, Cimarron, or Bonanza. Some of the fine fescues with good shade and root competition, drought tolerance and winter hardiness include: sheeps fescue (Bighorn), hard fescue (Biljart and Reliant), chewings fescue (Jamestown and Banner), and creeping fescue (Fortress, Ruby; Ensvlva).

If the shade is above 85 percent, it would be difficult to grow turfgrass.

Check with your local cooperative extension service and/or nurseries for plants suitable to grow in your area.

You might also consider some of the following ground covers in addition to turfgrass, for shady conditions:

*Note: varieties are listed as examples. Exclusion of any variety is unintentional.—ed.*

### SHADE TOLERANT GROUND COVERS

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| <i>Ajuga species</i>                    | ...Bugleweed          |
| <i>Aegopodium podagraria variegatum</i> | ...Goutweed           |
| <i>Convallaria majalis</i>              | ...Lily-of-the-Valley |
| <i>Euonymus species</i>                 | ...Wintercreeper      |
| <i>Gaultheria procumbens</i>            | ...Wintergreen        |
| <i>Hedera helix</i>                     | ...English Ivy        |
| <i>Hosta species</i>                    | ...Plantain Lily      |
| <i>Liriope spicata</i>                  | ...Lily turf          |
| <i>Lonicera species</i>                 | ...Honeysuckle        |
| <i>Mahonia repens</i>                   | ...Dwarf Holly Grape  |
| <i>Pachistima canbyi</i>                | ...Canby Pachistima   |
| <i>Teucrium chamaedrys</i>              | ...Germander          |
| <i>Vinca minor</i>                      | ...Myrtle             |
| <i>Xanthorrhiza simplicissima</i>       | ...Yellowroot         |

## Powdery mildew problem

*Every year on our oak trees we see whitish-powdery growth on the lower surface of the leaves. We also see a number of small, black specks present. Is this caused by mites?*

—MICHIGAN

The black structures you have seen are probably not mites, but fruiting bodies of the powdery mildew fungus, which contain fungal spores. There are several different powdery mildew fungi which attack oak,

including *Sphaerotheca lanestris*, the most troublesome mildew producer. Others include *Erisiphe trina*, *Microsphaeria alni*, and *Phyllactinia corylea*.

If the problem is powdery mildew, generally there is no need for fungicidal treatment on large shade trees. For aesthetic reasons, fungicides such as Bayleton or Cleary's 3336 can be used when the first sign of fungal mycelium is noticed. These fungi produce superficial, whitish-mycelial growth. As they mature, they produce small fruiting bodies, which may look like mites. These will not easily dislodge when leaves are shaken.

To check for mites, shake the leaves over some white paper or cloth. Mites will fall and begin to crawl on the white surface. Mites have eight legs while insects have six legs. Mites leave a stain when crushed. If the problem is related to mites, these are warm-season mites that become active when the temperature warms up. They overwinter away from hosts on nearby debris on the ground. Oil applications on trees to manage eggs will not work if applied as dormant application.

If the problem is mites, a miticide, such as horticultural oil, Kelthane, or Morstan in mid-June and two to three weeks later is recommended.

Read and follow all label specifications for best results. **LM**



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### SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO:

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Please allow two to three months for an answer to appear in the magazine.