

GROWING ROSES IN PARTIAL SHADE

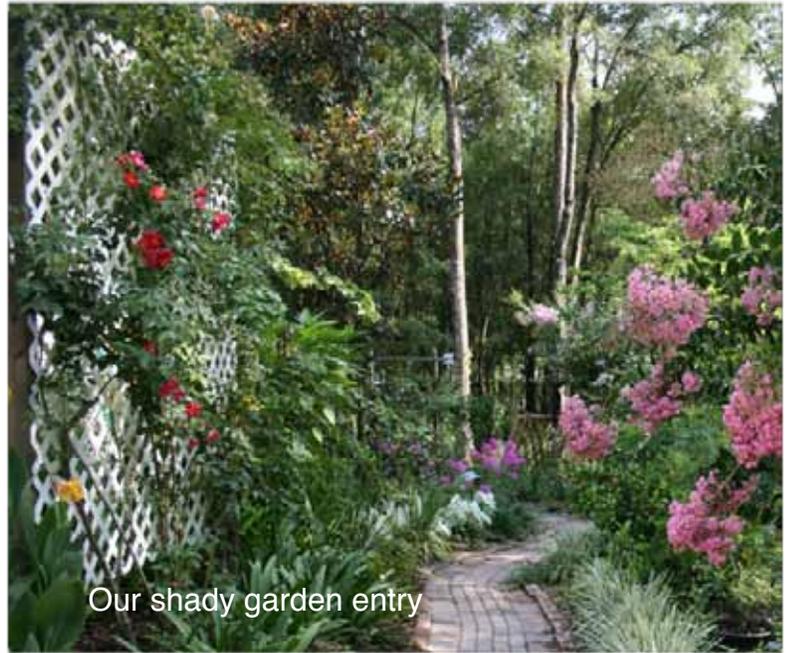
By Al Whitcomb

Many rose lovers do not have the luxury of optimal sun requirements for growing roses. That was exactly the case confronting us when we built a home in the middle of Nottingham Forest, a small community near Brooksville, Florida. Our yard is completely surrounded by trees. We tried to grow Saint Augustine grass in our back yard with little success, due to a lack of sunlight. So, we decided we would try to grow roses.

We planted three roses: 'Ballerina' a hybrid musk, 'Candelabra' a grandiflora and 'Trumpeter' a floribunda. As luck would have it, they all flourished and we were hooked.

We joined the Tampa Rose Society in 2003 and shortly thereafter were told by our Consulting Rosarians that, "roses require a minimum of six hours of direct sunlight per day to flourish."

Fortunately for us, we stubbornly pursued our hobby, and through the school of hard knocks, learned how to be successful with a partial shade garden.



Our shady garden entry

SO WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT GROWING ROSES IN PARTIAL SHADE?

- It is possible to have a beautiful rose garden in partial shade. Blooms have richer color and fade at slower rates than those receiving more direct sunlight.
- Roses require less watering with less exposure to sunlight.
- Blooms will be smaller.
- Most plants will produce fewer roses.
- A shady garden most likely will not produce a Queen of Show, because hybrid teas and grandifloras grown in the partial shade usually won't have cane or bloom diameters necessary to compete with roses grown in full sun gardens.
- Rose selections are paramount. Some roses will perform quite well both in partial shade gardens and at shows.
- It's important to identify micro-climate areas in your garden that may be in a position to receive more sunlight. Most areas in our garden receive about four hours of direct sunlight, while a small area gets about six hours.



Lyda Rose is a single rose that performs well with some shade.

Our general approach has been to place our hybrid tea roses where direct sunlight lasts the longest. We also grow roses capable of covering high structures, and that provides additional sun exposure. For areas with less sunlight, we try to select varieties we have seen growing in similar conditions or have found through research to be good partial sun candidates.

HOW CAN YOU BE SUCCESSFUL?

- Adjust your goals to fit the potential of your garden.
- Make your number one goal to grow roses for their beauty in the garden. You will have no problem in finding several rose varieties that will flourish in partial shade. Since size does not matter when participating in photo contests, you might want to add rose photography as a second avocation.
- Also, exhibit at rose shows. Don't worry about winning Queen of Show. Optimize your chances for winning other classes by growing several shrub, old garden, floribunda, hybrid musk and a variety of single roses.

WHAT ROSE VARIETIES GROW WELL IN PARTIAL SHADE?

Roses In The Shrub Class

Unlike most hybrid tea roses, many shrubs we grow add delicious fragrance to our garden. Several David Austin and Griffith Buck roses produce spectacular flushes in partial shade. Here are some examples:



Molineux is a beautiful yellow/orange globular shaped rose with 110+ petals. A medium sized bush with semi-glossy foliage, it performs well as both a garden and show rose. Molineux is our favorite Austin rose.



Sophy's Rose is a fast repeating rose that produces large flushes of red/purple blooms. It has a light tea fragrance, is vigorous and very disease resistant.



L. D. Braithwaite produces dark red large blooms. Its beauty is complemented by its intense fragrance. Other Austins we have found to perform well in partial shade include Christopher Marlowe, Marinette, Windermere and Ambridge Rose.



One of the Griffith Buck roses we love in our garden is Golden Unicorn. It is a good example of a rose that has richer yellows in the shade than when it is grown in full sun.

OLD GARDEN ROSES

We have found that OGRs require less care, are more fragrant and grow better in partial shade than do their modern counterparts.

Our favorite OGR is 'Spice', a white bermuda mystery/found rose. There is much speculation that this may be one of the four original stud chinas ('Hume's Blush'). It is very resistant to blackspot and blooms well both in full sun and partial shade. It has a spice fragrance and is very disease resistant.



Francis Dubreuil

'Francis Dubreuil' is the most fragrant tea rose I know. It consistently produces sprays of beautiful red roses. It's one of the first roses in our garden to bloom in the spring, and it continues to do so throughout the growing season.



Spice

'Souv. de la Malmaison', also known as 'Queen of Beauty and Fragrance', is our most beautiful OGR. Its large, quartered, doubled, pink bloom centers darken to a rosy pink. It excels in partial shade and is a fast repeat bloomer. It may require some spraying for blackspot, but it can be relied on to win awards at rose shows.

'Martha Gonzales', 'Marie Van Houtte', 'Miss Caroline' and 'Louis Philippe' also rank among our other OGR favorites.



Souv. de la Malmaison



Our Lady of Guadalupe

FLORIBUNDA

Floribunda roses are an excellent choice for partial shade areas in your garden. They are known for their sprays of color and the number of blooms they produce. Floribundas may not produce as many sprays as they do in full sun, but expect those pictured below to perform quite well in partial shade. 'Our Lady of Guadalupe' is our favorite floribunda. It flourishes in partial shade, producing bright pink blooms with a mild sweet fragrance. It has glossy dark green foliage and an upright growth habit.

'Julia Child', a 2005 introduction, is a beautiful butter gold floribunda hybridized by Tom Carruth. Its blooms are full, cupped, oldfashioned, borne in small clusters and have an intense, sweet licorice fragrance. It is free-flowering and has medium sized green glossy foliage.



'French Lace' is another floribunda that has remained popular since its introduction in 1981. This floribunda has ivory, pastel apricot to white flowers with high centers. It produces small bloom clusters with a slight fruity fragrance on a medium sized bush.

SINGLE ROSES

In my opinion, single rose varieties generally require less direct sunlight than varieties with more petals. Below are a few examples of singles that have flourished in our garden.

'Martha Gonzales', a shade tolerant "found rose," undoubtedly belongs to the china class. A hearty, disease resistant specimen, this compact, densely foliated rose can be expected to reach a height and width of 4-feet. It is an excellent border or planter bush that will re-bloom throughout the growing season. Flowers change with exposure to the sun from red to a deep wine red. Bright yellow stamens emerge from white bloom centers. It has little or no fragrance.

'Grace Seward', introduced by Tiny Petals Nursery in 1990, consistently produces near perfect 5-petal, single miniature white roses with a mild damask fragrance. She is one of our favorite roses to photograph and exhibit. Blooms are borne both singly and as sprays. 'Grace Seward' is a fast repeater that produces a plethora of 1.5- to 2-inch blooms during each flush. Bushes can easily reach a height of 4- to 5-feet. As is the case with several singles, we have found her to be shade tolerant and easy to grow.

'Excite', a dark pink hybrid tea, was hybridized by Diann Giles and entered the marketplace in 2000. It is a large single rose borne both singly and in sprays. It has no fragrance, numerous prickles and semi-glossy medium green foliage. Its bush height and width are about 5-feet. 'Excite' is both an excellent garden and exhibition rose.



'Sally Holmes' is a gorgeous white single rose that was first marketed in 1976. Its parents are 'Ivory Fashion' and 'Ballerina'. No wonder it is so beautiful. Its long-pointed apricot buds open to light apricot five-petal blooms that quickly fade to a near pure white five-petal flower. Long delicate yellow stamens provide a lovely contrast to the rose petals and dark green foliage. This vigorous shade tolerant rose is borne both singly and in clusters and has a slight fragrance. Its long canes allow us to grow it as a climber on an 8-foot wide by 6-foot high arbor.

Other single roses that have performed well in our garden include: 'Summer Wind', 'Karen Poulsen', 'Fashion Statement', 'Mutabilis' and 'Lyda Rose'.



FIRST PUBLISHED IN THE APRIL 2012 EDITION OF THE ROSE RAMBLER
NEWSLETTER OF THE MARION COUNTY ROSE SOCIETY
CAROL GREEN, EDITOR