

BELL COUNTY MASTER GARDENER
Tip of the Week
By Mary Lew Quesinberry
Kerria japonica (Japanese Yellow Rose)

If you want a wow factor in shade, try Kerria japonica also called Japanese Yellow Rose. Kerria japonica is a member of the rose family.

It provides year round beauty with its bright Kelly-green stems and leaves. It has a graceful, mounding form and sunny yellow blooms. It is deciduous and its stems remain green through out the winter. Tiny chrysanthemum-like blooms appear in late March on the branches before the leaves emerge. It is simply spectacular in spring when most other plants are still dormant. It blooms sporadically again throughout the summer and then puts on a beautiful late summer display. Even without blooms it is a bright spot in a shaded area. Kerria japonica can be used as a specimen plant in a large pot or planted in the landscape where it will make large green drifts that are beautiful year round. It requires no special care, has no pest problems and it is deer resistant.

Shaded areas can be difficult places to garden in. Gardening with too little light is a common problem in old established neighborhoods with their large trees and in other heavily wooded areas. Plants in shaded areas must also compete with trees for available moisture and the dense tree roots can make it difficult to dig a hole deep enough to plant anything. Plants you commonly see in heavily shaded areas are Cast Iron Plant, Liriope, Monkey Grass, ferns, impatiens and begonias. There are other plants to consider for shade such as Sedum, Ajuga (green/burgandy foliage and blue flowers), Texas Betany (pink), Mountain Sage (red), Turk's Cap (red), Columbine (yellow or red), Tropical Sage (many colors), Majestic Sage (blue) or Purple Heart.

Shade can be a quiet, cool, mysterious area in a garden with many planting options which are mostly green. Try Kerria japonica to brighten a shady place with unusual green color and bright yellow blooms. Do you have any questions? Contact ask.bcmga@gmail.com

