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“Helping Others Grow”

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A Gardener's Wish List

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'*Aralia cordata* 'Sun King' and *Hakonechloa macrall* 'All Gold' (2020 Theodore Klein Plant Award Winners) provide attractive color and texture interest in the part-shade to shade garden. I planted two of each last fall. Both survived the winter, and while neither are completely mature plants yet, both are adding great pops of bright yellow green color and interesting foliage to my mostly shady border garden.

My *Aralia cordata* is about 2 feet high and 3 feet wide now. Mature size is supposed to be 3-6 feet high and wide. Its compound leaves are 2-3 inches long and a bright yellow green color. It leafed out a bit later in the spring than my other plants and grew to its current size very quickly. The Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Finder says there will be 2-foot spikes of tiny white flowers in late summer that will mature into inedible berries in the fall that the birds will enjoy. *Aralia* is best grown in moist, fertile, well drained soils in part shade. Both my *aralias* are planted under white pines with a high canopy that provides filtered sunlight throughout the spring and summer.

Hakonechloa macra is more commonly known as Japanese forest grass. It is an ornamental grass with arching, linear, green-gold leaves. I planted my *hakonechloa* under a witch hazel tree; the area is shaded but gets a little dappled sunlight at midday. Its height and spread are about 1 foot now. At maturity it should be slightly taller, about 1.5 feet wide, and considerably fuller than it is now. Soil should be moist but well drained. Flower spikes appear in late summer but are not particularly showy. This plant spreads slowly via rhizomes. My plants are still not as full and lush as some of the pictures I have seen, but I love the texture and

bright spot of color they are bringing to a small shady area that needed a bright filler plant.

As many of you know, I have a huge problem with deer grazing my garden. Both the *aralia* and *hakonechloa* have passed the deer test. The deer have not tasted them! Given their bright color and interesting foliage, I think both are worthy of consideration for partly shady spots in your gardens.

References:

- Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Finder, <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/plantfinder/plantfindersearch.aspx>
- University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Nursery Crop Extension Research, <https://nursery-crop-extension.ca.uky.edu/ukrec-nursery-crops/theodore-klein-plant-awards>



Aralia cordata



Hakonechloa macra
