

Diversity in Underutilized Ornamental Plants for Landscaping of Shady Areas

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Landscapes designed with lots of coloured flowering plants have an elegant outlook and stimulating effect. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to bring colour in the shady areas of the landscapes as shade-loving plants generally are not so brightly-coloured. Coleus and Caladiums are promising underutilised ornamentals with inconspicuous flowers which can serve as colourful option for shady-landscape. They are grown primarily for the impact of its splendid and marvelous foliage and provide a bold texture and a thick density for shady-landscape with its vibrant colours and patterns. A study of collection, conservation and evaluation of different ornamental-coleus and caladiums were carried out at ICAR-CCARI during 2013-2017. As part of the study, 24 different types/varieties of coleus and 15 different types/varieties of caladiums were collected, documented and evaluated for their suitability for landscape use. The study throws light on the tremendous diversity in leaf colour and pattern existing in Coleus and Caladium cultivars. Different types were identified and recommended for various landscaping purposes like beds, borders, hedges, planters, hanging baskets, vertical gardens or containers.

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