Homestead Gardens Plant Finder

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Plum Smokey Mullein

Verbascum 'Plum Smokey'



Plum Smokey Mullein flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 8 inches

Flower Height: 18 inches

Spread: 12 inches

Spacing: 8 inches

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 5a

Ornamental Features

Plum Smokey Mullein has masses of beautiful spikes of plum purple flowers with dark red eyes rising above the foliage from mid spring to mid summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its oval leaves remain dark green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Plum Smokey Mullein is an herbaceous perennial with tall flower stalks held atop a low mound of foliage. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Plum Smokey Mullein is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Plum Smokey Mullein will grow to be about 8 inches tall at maturity extending to 18 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 12 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 8 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. It grows at a fast rate, and tends to be biennial, meaning that it puts on vegetative growth the first year, flowers the second, and then dies. However, this variety tends to self-seed and will thereby endure for years in the garden if allowed, although because it is a hybrid, the seedlings may not come true to type. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant should only be grown in full sunlight. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in poor soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid. It can be propagated by cuttings; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.