

ANGELICA & ANGELICA GIGAS Colour Flower Dark Purple in Autumn and Summer Foliage Green in Autumn, Spring and Summer Angelica gigas is an impressive and statuesque umbellifer with huge, yet elegant domed, scented beetroot-coloured flower heads adored by bees, butterflies and – in the autumn - birds. Great for back of the border Easy for beginners short lived perennial Sow mar – may will self sow after mulch deeply in dry conditions



Stem Dark Purple in Autumn, Spring and Summer Size Ultimate height 1.5-2.5 metres Ultimate spread 1-1.5 metres Time to ultimate height 2-5 years

Full sun / Part shade / Full shade North-facing, East-facing / West-facing Sheltered Cultivation Ideally deep, moist, loamy soil in full or partial shade but it can tolerate drier conditions if mulched. A short-lived perennial. Soil Moist but well-drained or Poorly-drained Acid, Alkaline or Neutral Loam or Clay Propagation by seed / cold frame with good light, as soon as ripe. Exposure to light is required for germination. Move seedlings when young as older plants resent disturbance



AUBRETIA



Aubrieta (*Aubrieta deltoidea*), also called purple rock cress, is a low-growing perennial used as an edging plant or a ground cover. It produces delicate purple or blue flowers that last from three to four weeks. The plants bloom once in the spring and offer a repeat performance in the late summer. Aubrieta does best in full or part sun and rich, well-drained soil. You can sow the seeds directly into the garden in the late fall or early spring and will sprout two to three weeks after planting.



BLUE BUTTERFLY PEA SEEDS

This perennial climber blooms the whole year through. Propagation is by seeds and cuttings. Growing from seeds, it is expected that the plant can bloom in 6 weeks. This plant need a rich, moist soil with full sun to partial shade. It tends to get leggy quickly, so pinching helps to keep it bushy. When growing from seeds, it is advisable to soak the seeds overnight in water before sowing. Seeds will germinated in 1-2 weeks. Cuttings root easily in moist sand or vermiculite.



BLUE PIMPERNEL

Blue pimpernel is a long-blooming annual with stunning, electric-blue flowers. Blue pimpernel is short and bushy, perfect in containers or at the front of the border. It self sows in areas with long growing seasons. Hardy in zones 9-11. Grow as an annual elsewhere. Also known as *Anagallis linifolia*.¹

Blue Pimpernel grows as an annual and is a flower. Being an annual plant, it tends to grow best over the course of a single year. Blue Pimpernel is known for growing to a height of approximately 25.5 cm (9.95 inches). This plant tends to bloom in mid summer.



Due to how easy it is to grow in a variety of conditions, Blue Pimpernel is great for beginner gardeners and those that like low maintenance gardens.

Plant in a location that enjoys full sun and remember to water moderately. Zone 9 to 11 are typically the USDA Hardiness Zones that are appropriate for this plant (although this can vary based on your microclimate). Keep in mind when planting that Blue Pimpernel is thought of as half hardy, so remember to protect this plant from frosts and low temperatures

A low maintenance alternative to planting a lawn, use this colorful mix to beautify your yard! Colors range from white and yellow to pink, blue and lavender. This mixture of mostly perennials is low growing (4"-12 tall) and will provide more color the second year after planting.

Contains Roman Chamomile, English Daisy, Snow-in-Summer, Sweet Alyssum, Birds Foot Trefoil, Baby Blue Eyes, Blue Pimpernel, Creeping Daisy, Pinks, German Chamomile, Creeping Thyme, and Johnny-Jump-Up. 1 oz seeds 1,000 sq ft or use 2-3.5 lb /acre. A small amount of seed goes a long way. Mix seed with sand or compost for easier and more even coverage when broadcasting. Seeds are small and require less soil cover than larger seeds. Requires minimal irrigation. Seed at about 1-8 depth. Not appropriate for pasture.



BORAGE



Borage is often grown in the vegetable or herb garden because it is such a bee magnet and because it is considered a good growing companion for other plants. However, it is equally beautiful in a cottage style flower garden, where it has room to self-seed. Harvesting or deadheading will keep it in bloom longer. Sun Exposure:



Full sun to partial shade. Mature Size:18 - 36" (45 - 90cm) H x 9 - 24" (22 - 60cm) W. They can become gangly and floppy when they get top heavy with flowers. Growing borage in full sun will help make for sturdier plants. Borage

can bloom from late Spring through summer. Staggering planting times will give a longer period of bloom and provide a longer harvest time.

GREEN MANURE - CRIMSON CLOVER - 25GM SEEDS (ORGANIC)



Clover thrives in an alkaline soil with a pH of 6.0 or higher. Apply lime to correct the soil if it is too acidic.

Sow seed depth 1 cm early spring water until established



CORN FLOWER Dig soil but dont fertalise, sow in rows to identify seedlings or 35cm



apart and 6mm deep Alternatively, scatter the seed and rake it in. water well seedlings should appear 2 to 4 weeks time each needs 35cm space so thin out

if it doesn't rain, keep the soil moist until they're established. The plants will need support or they'll look very drunk come June. Try placing sticks around the planted area and thread two layers of mesh netting over plants to grow through straight. Cut

constantly like sweet peas to encourage flowers. . Cut them just before they open fully – the centre of the flower should still be dipped inwards slightly.

Many people associate meadow planting with cornflowers, but in fact cornfield annuals such as cornflower and corn poppy last only one year in a permanent meadow. This is because they can exist only where soil is disturbed, which is why they grow in ploughed fields.



COSMOS

The seeds are long and thin, so can be easily handled, and need to be



planted into modules with compost. Plant the cosmos seed in the middle of the module just below the surface of the compost, water in well and place in a greenhouse or warm windowsill to help germination.

2. When large enough to handle and the risk of frost has past, plant out in your garden into soil that has been improved with manure or garden compost. Plant

the cosmos in full sun and water well, then add a mulch to help conserve moisture.

3. Stake and tie plants if necessary during the growing season and don't forget to water regularly.

Cosmos will flower till the first frosts if you regularly dead head the plants and feed with chicken manure or blood, fish and bone.



HYACINTH BEAN VINE

Hyacinth Bean Vine is a fast growing, flowering vine, with pretty purple flowers. If you're looking for an annual flowering vine that grows at a stellar pace, the Hyacinth Bean Vine is for you. It grows 10' - 15' in a single season!

Hyacinth Bean Vine is easy to grow. Flowers bloom from summer through fall in purple and some white colors. [Butterflies](#) are attracted to the bright blooms.



As a flowering vine, they need some type of support to climb. A trellis or fence works well. The support should



be big enough to support ten to fifteen feet of vine growth.

Important Note: Raw bean seeds are poisonous.

They need to be boiled for a long time, to make them safe to eat. They are a food crop in some parts of the world.



Propagation:

Hyacinth Bean Vine are grown from seeds. Sow Hyacinth Bean Vine seeds directly into your flower garden after all danger of frost has past. Plant seeds 1 1/2" deep. Final plant spacing should be six inches apart.

Seeds germination period requires two to three weeks. For indoor starts, try a [seedling germination mat](#).

Do not plant seeds until after the last frost date your area. Plants are susceptible to frost.

Hyacinth Bean Vine is easy to grow. Grow in full sun. Plants prefer a rich, well draining soils to fuel their fast, season long growth. Mix a healthy dose of compost into the soil prior to planting.

Plants like a lot of water and nutrients. While they like lots of water, they do not like wet soil. Keep soil moist, not wet. Add fertilizer when planting and every month during the season. Use a high phosphorous formula just before the first blooming period.

Plants will begin to bloom in summer, and continue to do so into the fall. After the flowers bloom, purple pods will begin to form. They grow up to three inches. Raw beans inside are poisonous. Keep away from children and pets. Boiling beans for a long period cooks out the poison, and makes beans edible.

Plants are annuals that are very susceptible to frost. They may still be in bloom when frost arrives.

Unfortunately, covering this long vine, may prove impractical.

Bean Vine are good "re-seeders". If the pods are allowed to open and pour out their beans, you will find many new plants next year. Do not disturb the soil until seedlings have begun to grow. Thinning will almost certainly be needed.

LEMON BALM – SWEET MELISSA PLANTS

Strongly lemon scented, Lemon Balm is a popular ingredient of herbal teas and potpourris! Fresh leaves give a nice lemon flavor to salads, soups, sauces and meats. Lemon Balm is also valued for its medicinal properties! Used to treat colds, flu, indigestion, etc. It is a perennial that grows up to 30 inches tall and produces insignificant pale yellow flowers in summer. Should be mulched to protect plant in harsh climates. Attractive to bees, butterflies, and/or birds. May be invasive. Deadhead to prevent self sowing.

Other Common Names: Common balm, Bee Balm, Sweet Balm, Bee's Leaf, Honey Plant

Herb Duration: Perennial

Days to Herb Maturity: 75 Herb Height: 12" to 18" Herb Spacing: 12" to 15"

Herb Planting: Sow seeds indoors before last frost, or direct sow seeds outside after last frost. Plant seeds just under soil surface, and water.

Herb Seed Saving: Allow seed heads to dry on plants; then remove heads, break them open, and collect seeds. Clean and dry the seeds before storage in cool dry conditions

Very uniform plant with high leaf yields and better winter hardiness than common lemon balm. Mulch if winter temperatures drop below 0°F



LEMON MINT / CATNIP 100 SEEDS



Catnip is hardy in zones 3 to 9. The plant can grow over 3 feet tall (1 meter). Catnip will do well in most soil types, but it prefers rich, loamy, and well draining soil. Propagated by seed, and it is easy to germinate the seeds. Use sterilized black earth mixed with peat moss, water the soil so that it is moist but not soggy, then surface so the seeds. Catnip seeds require light to germinate, so if growing indoors just let them sit on top of the soil. If germinating the seed outdoors lightly cover the seed with soil or peat moss. Catnip prefers moist soil with a pH of 6.1 to 7.8. Catnip grows best



under full sun, but it will tolerate partial shade. The seed will germinate in 2-3 weeks. It is easier to start the seeds indoors and then transplant them outside after risk of frost is past.

LILAC – VARIOUS - FRENCH PEKIN JAPANESE



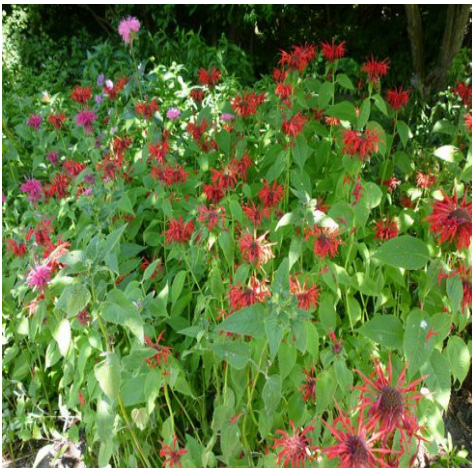
Dig one 2- to 4-inch-deep hole in your yard for each lilac [seed](#) in early springtime, just after the ground fully thaws. Ensure that the planting location receives plenty of direct sunlight. Lilac bushes



require at least six hours of full sunlight each day.

- 2 Place one seed in each hole and cover it with soil. Lilac bushes can be planted in regular, moderately packed garden soil.
- 3 Water the planted areas daily. They should remain moist but not overly muddy. [Seedlings](#) should sprout within 30 to 90 days of planting.
- 4 Cut buds off each lilac seedling the following spring. While some lilac seedlings flower in springtime, they can divert more nutrients to growth and overall [health](#) if you prevent premature flowering. After the first year of growth, you can leave the buds intact to promote active springtime blooming

MONARDA - BERGAMOT - BEE BALM



Sow indoors late February to mid-March, or direct sow in early spring when a light frost is still possible. Seeds can also be direct sown in October. Optimal soil temperature for germination: 15-21°C (60-70°F). Seeds should sprout in 10-40 days. Bottom heat will speed germination.

Barely cover the tiny seeds with soil. Thin or space transplants 45-60cm (18-24") apart. These vigorous perennials will grow in, closer together over time.

Any ordinary garden soil will work. Plant in full sun to partial shade. Where summers are long, plants are prone to mildew, so avoid overhead watering. Deadhead regularly to prolong the blooming period. Plants spread by rhizome growth, and should be dug and divided every three years.

Pick the leaves as desired for fresh use in the kitchen. For drying, harvest leaves before the flowers open. Cut flowers for drying as soon as they're fully open. Masses of tiered pink-purple blossoms grow from August until frost. For teas, or crush leaves for pest repellent



PHACELIA



Phacelia seedlings can tolerate light frost, but the plants are easily damaged by hard freezes.

For use as ground cover or bee plant – easily grown and companion with calendula



Phlox



Sowing: Sow in winter through to summer or sow in late autumn.

Sow January to March for flowering the first year and for cut flower production (Blooms from August onwards) Sow

April to July for flowering the following year. Sow in October to overwinter.

Approx 32 weeks are needed from seeding to



bloom. Some seeds need a period of moisture and cold before they will germinate. If you are not planting in autumn / winter, where temperatures are cold, this period can be artificially stimulated by placing the seed in a refrigerator. Fridges are usually set to 4°C (39°F) which is the perfect temperature for seeds that need the cold to stimulate germination. (Do not place them in the freezer, they will die!) Moisten the seeds by soaking for ten minutes then place them in a polythene bag containing a little damp compost or vermiculite. Leave for four weeks then bring out and sow the seeds in cells or pots for germination

Sow seeds in pots or cells containing a moist seed starting mix (John Innes or similar). Cover with vermiculite or a sprinkling of fine compost. Germination usually takes 14 to 28 days at 0 to 4°C (32-39°F), or 7 to 14 days at 15 to 18 °C (59-64°F) Once the seedlings are large enough to handle, (about 3-4 weeks after sowing) transplant to individual pots, 8-10cm (3-4in) and grow on at around 10°C. Pinching the top once after transplanting promotes a compact plant habit and will increase the quantity of flowers.

When planting out, set the crown of each plant about 4cm (1½in) below the soil surface. Space 60 to 90cm (24 to 36in) apart. Use nets to keep the stems upright and protect the outdoors against wind damage.

Plants can be given them the "Chelsea Chop" - cut them back at the end of May - to create shorter, bushier plants. To enhance flower production and good health fertilize in early spring and again in early summer with a good flower food or an organic fertiliser. Divide congested plants in March to April.

Once established, garden phlox need little attention to watering but give them some water during extended dry periods in summer. You'll know they need a drink if and when the foliage wilts during dry spells. When the plant is totally dormant in late autumn or early winter, dead foliage can be trimmed back to the ground.

Peony -sow outdoors -. Prepare a nursery bed area somewhere in your garden area. Simply plant the peony seeds much as you would beans. Insert a marker label to



delineate the area. Most seeds should make a shoot in the coming spring/summer months. The outdoor planting in early fall gives the seeds their obligatory warm



of

moist treatment, the cold treatment of winter followed by the warming spring. Or

Keep planting area moist (mulch).

Throughout the summer you will see the first leaves appear. Some seedlings may not put forth leaves until next spring...be patient. Leave the little plants over winter (a further layer of mulch will help them overwinter without heaving) until Aug-Sept the following year. Transplant at this time to about 1 foot apart and at the same depth as the plant was growing. The little peony roots look a bit like carrots with coarse roots.

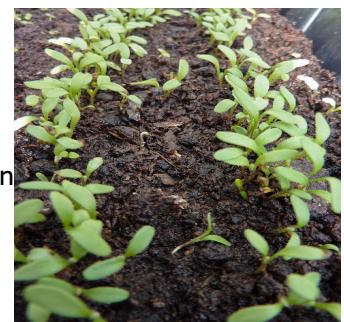


With a bit of luck (and good management) you can have a few blooms the following year (3rd year). You can expect to have plenty of blooms in year 4 and 5.

Stock Mattiola



Sow early spring to early summer or autumn in pots or directly outdoors As an annual plant early in spring, for flowering late summer /



autumn. As a biennial, plant later in the year and overwinter for flowers in spring. seed sown in succession, will provide continuous flowering. Seed can be sown directly outdoors in spring, or in mild-winter regions sown in late summer/autumn. later sowing will often produce flowers in winter as well as spring. (The plants will take moderate frost but will not set flower buds if the nights are very cold). Sow in a good free draining compost, do not exclude light, which is beneficial to germination - 8 to 12 days at 15 to 18°C (60 to 65°F). Transplant plants when large enough to handle and keep cool 10 to 15°C (50 to 59°F). harden off over 10 to 15 days and plant out 30cm (12in) apart after mid-May. In a sunny position in well-drained soil. full sun with moist well-drained soil, and will benefit from a light dressing of lime. taller species need staking and should be sheltered from wind. if winter rainfall is heavy, try aised beds for good drainage.

SWEET PEA – Soaking seeds for 24 hours before sowing speeds up the process



Seedlings like to be kept cool and in the light Sow Autumn to early winter in long pots, pinch out tips when 4 leaves, over winter in light cool place, and plant out 2 plants to a vertical mild March, Sow direct mid march – April zig zag 3 to each vertical



about 3” apart with verticals at least 8” apart Grow some spare at the end in case of slug damage. For early sowings sheltered sunny spot and grow some amongst the peas to encourage insect pollination seedlings can get overwatered but plants like moisture so rich soil preferable



SWEET SULTAN The best types of scented biennials to grow are: Sweet William, Wallflower, Siberian Wallflower, Sweet Sultan, Sweet Rocket and Brompton Stock.



All are very easily grown. Here's how:

(1) Prepare an outdoor seed bed during Mid May/late June: Fork over soil, firm it with your feet, then rake to a fine tilth.

(2) Using a pointed stick and string line, draw out half inch deep drills and sow the seeds thinly. Gently cover the seeds by raking along the line. Label each line.

(3) Keep the plot well watered, during dry spells and during late June/mid July dig up the seedlings and plant out in rows 1 foot apart and 9 inches between plants.

(4) Keep the young plants weed free and continue to water during dry weather.

(5) During late September, lift the plants and plant out in their final flowering positions in your borders.

SWEET WILLIAM

Flowers are produced just 14 weeks after sowing, but only if sowing takes place between



January and May. (February is the best month to start seeds.) Later sowings flower the following year Sprinkle the seeds on to well-watered seed compost in a seed tray. Cover very lightly and place the tray in an ambient position out of full sun: these seeds germinate best in temperatures of 64F-68F (17C-19C) and not in fierce heat.



Once the seedlings have two true leaves, prick out into individual small pots.

When the roots reach the bottom, plant them into the garden. This can be done until late September.

members of the pink family and this indicates their need for good drainage and an open, bright spot

SWEET WOODRUFF



Sweet woodruff can also be propagated by seed.

Sweet woodruff seeds can be planted directly into the soil in the spring or can be started indoors up to 10 weeks before your area's last frost date.

To direct sow sweet woodruff, in early spring simply spread the seeds over the area that you wish to grow them and lightly cover the area with sifted soil



or peat moss. Then water the area.

To start sweet woodruff indoors, spread the seeds evenly in the growing container and lightly cover the top with peat moss. Water the container and then place it into your refrigerator for 2 weeks. After you have chilled the sweet woodruff seeds, place them in a cool, lighted area (50F), such as a basement or an unheated, attached garage to germinate. Once they have germinated, you can move the sweet woodruff seedlings to a warmer location.

Sweet woodruff spreads by runners. In moist soil, it can spread very quickly and can become invasive in the right conditions. It is often recommended that you plant sweet woodruff ground cover in an area that you would not mind seeing naturalized by sweet woodruff.

Start sweet woodruff seeds five to seven weeks before the expected last frost date.

- 2 Fill a six-pack planting container with loose, moistened seedling compost. Do not firm the compost into the cells of the planting container. A somewhat rough surface is required.
- 3 Sprinkle two or three sweet woodruff seeds into each cell of the planting container. Scatter a very thin layer of medium-grit sand on top of the seeds to anchor them.
- 4 Mist each cell of the planting container with a spray bottle to settle the soil and seeds. Spray until the seedling compost feels moist 1/4 inch below the surface.
- 5 Stretch a length of [plastic](#) wrap across the planting container to hold moisture near the seeds. Place the planting container inside a refrigerator for two weeks.
- 6 Move the planting container to a bright, sunny room where temperatures stay around 70 to 75 degrees Fahrenheit, or place it on a propagation mat beneath a fluorescent lamp if a naturally warm, bright spot is not available.
- 7 Mist the sweet woodruff seeds whenever the soil surface feels dry when touched. Spray each cell until water gathers on the surface of the seedling compost.
- 8 Watch for germination in 15 to 25 days. Remove all but one of the sweet woodruff seedlings from each cell of the planting container. Keep the strongest, healthiest seedling.

9 Keep the sweet woodruff seedlings indoors until one week after the last frost in spring. Plant them 10 to 20 inches apart in a shady bed with moist, fertile soil once outdoor daytime temperatures reach 65 degrees Fahrenheit.

CREEPING THYME - THYMUS SERPYLLUM - GROUNDCOVER



Seeds can be sown anytime between May and August, whereas plant starts can be dug and divided late spring. Avoid transplanting late autumn because frost can raise plants and cause winter freeze damage. Creeping thyme blooms in the late spring to early summer. Prepare soil with plenty organic matter 6-10 inches deep. Creeping thyme grows best in a soil with an alkaline pH. Make sure your planting area



is well-drained. Plants will grow in full sun, partial sun, partial shade and even full shade. However, in full shade, they grow or flower to their full potential. To cover large areas, space new plants about 6 inches apart in a triangular or square pattern. In a particularly rainy climate, sometimes adding a thick layer of gravel mulch is helpful in preventing the roots from sitting in overly wet soil. Mulch during the winter months gives protection from frost. Not necessary in rock garden

- As creeping thyme grows, the inner stems can become woody and die back a bit, especially in the center. After four years cut out any dead parts and replant the rooted outside parts of the plant.
- Beware of footrot or fungal diseases if the soil is overly moist.
- Fish fertilizer or liquid plant food during the late spring and early summer helps boost growth
- Creeping thyme tends to repel harmful insects from the other plants, so it may be a good idea to plant around vegetables and ornamental flowers.
- Creeping thyme grows about 2 to 4 inches high and can spread up to 2 or more feet in width.

VERBENA BONARIENSIS - Verbena great at attracting butterflies to the garden in the summer. It can grow



It can grow to 6 ft (120 cm) tall and can spread to 3 ft (90 cm) wide. At maturity, it will develop a woody base. Fragrant blooming from mid-summer until early frost. The stem is square with very long internodes. Leaves are ovate to ovate-lanceolate with a toothed margin and grow up to 4 in (10 cm) long.



Growing conditions For the final planting position, these plants

like to be in full sun in well drained soil. Sow feb – april on surface and cover with thin layer of grit or vermiculite place on warm sunny windowsill about 3 weeks, at 24C transplant into pots when large enough harden off and plant out when frost is passed. Need 50 cm space when planting

VIRGINIA CREEPER



Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), also known as woodbine, is a perennial flowering vine native to the U.S. Blooming from June to August, the fruit forms in September and the Virginia creeper drops the seeds to the soil from September until February. It readily re-seeds itself so you will have no trouble germinating the seed. Virginia creeper can be quite invasive if not controlled by pruning. It attaches itself to whatever gets in its way and



will smother other landscape plants. Soak seed for 24 hours and plant in pot for winter season or after frost in direct sunlight 1/2£ deep. Plant them 3/8 inch deep in an area that receives direct sun.

4 Water the planting area until the top 6 inches of soil is saturated. Keep the soil moist. Once established watering should not be necessary except in extreme drought.

VIPERS BUGLOSS - ECHIUM VULGARE



great plant to attract bees to feed your bees. along with Borage and Phacelia, the plant is much loved by almost all bee species, especially bumblebees. A stable source of nectar for months, repeat bloom summer / autumn providing nectar for overwintering. Unlike many flowers. Echium has a most unusual feature. The nectar inside the flower is protected from both vaporization (when it's hot) and being washed away in the rain it unusually also provides nectat through the day .



Bees with good access to Echium can collect between 12-20 lbs of nectar a day. The plant continues to bloom throughout drought periods. The concentration of sugars in the nectar varies, from 22.6 to 48.3% depending on the quality of the soil, and not on the amount of rain.

Sow March-May for flowers June-September, or sow August-September to flower May-July the following year. directly outdoors dry, sunny position in well-drained or sandy soil. full sun or part shade. The seed can also be sown indoors, but direct sowing is preferable, as they have a long taproot which can be damaged when transplanting. Make two or three successive sowings for continuous flowers.

Sowing Direct. Prepare the area where they are to grow. Removing any weeds or stones and rake to a fine tilth. Sow thinly, 6mm (1/4in) deep in drills 30cm (12in) apart. Sow the seed sparingly or they will choke out other seedlings. Water ground regularly until the seedlings are established, especially in dry periods. Optimum germination temperature: 60 to 65°F (15 to 18°C). If sowing more than one annual in the same bed, consider marking the sowing areas with a ring of sand and a label. The seedlings appear in rapprox 6 to 8 weeks space out to at least 38cm (18in) apart. Deadhead to prolong flowering and encourage new flower buds. Plants will reseed if a few heads are left to mature. Leave some plants to die down and self seed or collect for next year, others can be pulled up and composted but be careful of the sharp spines which can irritate the skin

VERBASCUM CHAIXII 'ALBUM' MULLIEN-



Verbascums are very easy to grow from seed, sowings in early spring will flower the same year, while late sowings will flower the following year.

Sow seed on the surface of a seed tray in John Innes loam, cover with grit and water from below by dipping the tray in a sink and then stand outside to germinate.

Biennial first year is rosette with soft bluish furry leaves up to 12" long and 5" wide

One mullein plant may make over 100,000 seeds in a year. Seeds can survive almost any conditions and can last up to 100 years. Since mullein can't grow in shade, the seeds can lay in the soil, waiting until plants around them die or are removed.



Potting up seed 50/50 blend of propagation grade perlite and coconut fiber. Using coconut

fiber rather than peat moss for several reasons: coconut fiber re-wets easily should the medium become too dry; the seeds may be in their first pot a long time, and coconut fiber is slower to break down and does not acidify the medium as it ages to the extent that peat moss does; the harvesting of peat moss is harmful to the environment, whereas coconut fiber comes from the dead base of fallen leaves from coconut palms, and is harvested without any detriment to the palm tree.

Add water and mix the two ingredients until the mix is well moistened, and a fistful of it will hold together when squeezed, but does not drip water at the same time. If your mix is too drippy, just add more of each substance until you reach the "holds together but doesn't drip" stage, as pictured.

The final mix is dark brown, with flecks of white perlite mixed evenly throughout.

When the seeds are sown we top off the pots with #2 chicken grit, also known as hen-grit. This is done to reduce weeds in the pots that may blow in and makes weed removal easy, and it holds the seed in the soil so that if the pots get watered too vigorously, the seed is less likely to wash out. And it looks so tidy! We keep a 1/2 liter measuring cup handy for this step. For seed starting we like to start with clean new rose pots. The pots are packed with medium up to 1/2 inch from the top of the pots. Pack the soil rather lightly—packing it firmly makes it harder for new roots to work their way down into the soil mix.