Water Mint

Mentha aquatica



Water Mint foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Description:

This variety grows best in moist to wet soil, an excellent pondside planting; great container plant and it is suggested that planting within a pot in the ground will curtail invasiveness

Edible Qualities

Water Mint is a perennial herb that is commonly grown for its edible qualities, although it does have ornamental merits as well. The fragrant pointy light green leaves are usually harvested from late spring to late summer. The leaves have a minty taste.

The leaves are most often used in the following ways:

- Cooking
- Seasoning

Features & Attributes

Water Mint features bold clusters of shell pink tubular flowers with violet overtones along the stems in mid summer. Its attractive fragrant pointy leaves remain light green in color throughout the season.

This is an herbaceous perennial herb with a spreading, ground-hugging habit of growth. 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 is a high maintenance plant that will require regular care and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Invasive

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Water Mint is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Herb Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Water Mint will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. 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 is quite ornamental as well as edible, and is as much at home in a landscape or flower garden as it is in a designated herb garden. It does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in moist to wet soil, and will even tolerate some standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Water Mint is a good choice for the edible garden, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its spreading habit of growth, it is ideally suited for use as a 'spiller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the edges where it can spill gracefully over the pot. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.