False Columbine

Semiaquilegia ecalcarata



False Columbine flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 18 inches

Spread: 12 inches

Spacing: 8 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 2

Other Names: Granny's Bonnets, Spurless Columbine

Description:

Dainty, nodding, bell-shaped, violet to plum flowers on a compact, many-branched plant; makes a welcome addition to shade and woodland gardens

Ornamental Features

False Columbine features delicate nodding violet bell-shaped flowers at the ends of the stems from late spring to early summer. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its lobed compound leaves remain dark green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

False Columbine is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, 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. It has no significant negative characteristics.

False Columbine is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

False Columbine will grow to be about 16 inches tall at maturity, 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 dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 3 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 performs well in both full sun and full shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate 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.

False Columbine is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers against which the larger thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.