Sweet Butterbur

Petasites palmatus



Sweet Butterbur
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 18 inches

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 30 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Other Names: Sweet Coltsfoot, Western Coltsfoot

Description:

This variety will form a sprawling, dense colony featuring deeply divided palmate foliage; white flower spikes appear in spring before the leaves; an excellent woodland groundcover for wet areas

Ornamental Features

Sweet Butterbur is primarily valued in the garden for its broadly spreading habit of growth. It features bold spikes of white flowers rising above the foliage in early spring before the leaves. Its attractive deeply cut palmate leaves remain green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Sweet Butterbur is an herbaceous perennial with a ground-hugging habit of growth. Its wonderfully bold, coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced garden 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Invasive

Sweet Butterbur is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Bog Gardens

Planting & Growing

Sweet Butterbur will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 30 inches apart. 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 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 highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division.