Dwarf Chinese Astilbe

Astilbe chinensis 'Pumila'



Dwarf Chinese Astilbe flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 8 inches

Flower Height: 12 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 18 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 2

Other Names: False Spirea

Description:

A low maintenance, shade loving variety; low foliage mounds of ferny, toothed foliage with tall stems rising above, presents lilac-pink, plume-like flowers; an excellent addition to rain gardens, cut-flower arrangements or used as groundcover



Dwarf Chinese Astilbe in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Dwarf Chinese Astilbe has masses of beautiful plumes of lilac purple flowers with pink overtones rising above the foliage from mid to late summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its serrated ferny compound leaves remain emerald green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Dwarf Chinese Astilbe is an herbaceous perennial with a mounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Dwarf Chinese Astilbe is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Dwarf Chinese Astilbe will grow to be about 8 inches tall at maturity extending to 12 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 24 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 18 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. It grows at a medium 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 a location that gets morning sunlight but is shaded from the hot afternoon sun, although it will also grow in full shade. Keep it away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have rich, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone over the growing season to conserve soil moisture. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Dwarf Chinese Astilbe 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 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.