Variegated Bigleaf Hydrangea

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Variegata'



Variegated Bigleaf Hydrangea flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Other Names: French Hydrangea

Description:

A wonderfully showy summer-blooming garden shrub with large pink or blue lacecap flowers complemented by very pretty variegated foliage; blooms on old wood so protecting flower buds in winter may be necessary; flower color depends on soil pH

Ornamental Features

Variegated Bigleaf Hydrangea features bold steel blue lacecap flowers with pink overtones at the ends of the branches from mid summer to early fall. The flowers are excellent for cutting. It has attractive white-variegated forest green foliage. The glossy pointy leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color.



Variegated Bigleaf Hydrangea in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Variegated Bigleaf Hydrangea is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Variegated Bigleaf Hydrangea is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Variegated Bigleaf Hydrangea will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This shrub does best in a location that gets morning sunlight but is shaded from the hot afternoon sun, although it will also grow in partial 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 not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in both summer and winter to conserve soil moisture and protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Variegated Bigleaf Hydrangea makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.