Cross-Leaved Heath

Erica tetralix



Cross-Leaved Heath in fall
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 18 inches

Flower Height: 24 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 4

Description:

A superb colorful groundcover for poor, acid soils, also great for massing in the garden; requires organic highly acidic soil, full sun and moisture but absolutely no standing water; numerous cultivars available

Ornamental Features

Cross-Leaved Heath is covered in stunning spikes of pink bell-shaped flowers rising above the foliage from late winter to mid spring. It has grayish green foliage with white undersides. The tiny needles remain grayish green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Cross-Leaved Heath is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a mounded form. It lends an extremely fine and delicate texture to the landscape composition which should be used to full effect.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting bees to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Cross-Leaved Heath is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Cross-Leaved Heath will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity extending to 24 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 24 inches. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This shrub should only be grown in full sunlight. 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 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. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.