Sweet Summer® Surprise Garden Phlox

Phlox paniculata 'Sweet Summer Surprise'



Sweet Summer Surprise Garden Phlox flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 18 inches

Flower Height: 24 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Spacing: 14 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4b

Other Names: Sweet Summer Surprise Violet White

Group/Class: Sweet Summer Series

Description:

Exceptional clusters of vibrant violet flowers with white flares and hot pink centers; plants are well branched, with an early flowering period, suitable for containers or small perennial borders; strong disease resistance

Ornamental Features

Sweet Summer Surprise Garden Phlox features bold clusters of lightly-scented violet star-shaped flowers with hot pink eyes and a white flare at the ends of the stems from mid spring to early summer. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its pointy leaves emerge burgundy in spring, turning green in color with showy burgundy variegation throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Sweet Summer Surprise Garden Phlox is a dense herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Disease

Sweet Summer Surprise Garden Phlox is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Sweet Summer Surprise Garden Phlox will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity extending to 24 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 18 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 14 inches apart. 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 full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. 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 is a selection of a native North American species. 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.

Sweet Summer Surprise Garden Phlox is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use 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. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.