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Blazing Star

Liatris spicata

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 18 inches

Spacing: 14 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 2b

Other Names: Dense Blazing Star, Marsh Gayfeather

Description:

An upright clump-forming plant that towers to the sky with its tall, pinkish-purple flower spikes; visually spectacular when massed together along a border or as a garden accent; easily grown, hardy and disease resistant



Blazing Star flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Blazing Star has masses of beautiful spikes of purple flowers with pink overtones rising above the foliage from early to mid summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its grassy leaves remain green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Blazing Star is an herbaceous perennial with a rigidly upright and towering form. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Blazing Star is recommended for the following landscape applications;



Blazing Star in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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

Planting & Growing

Blazing Star will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, 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. The flower stalks can be weak and so it may require staking in exposed sites or excessively rich soils. 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!



Blazing Star in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This plant should only be grown in full sunlight. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under typical garden conditions. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by division.

Blazing Star 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. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.