Snavely's GARDEN CORNER

Over 50 YEARS OF SERVICE
And expert advice!

Purple Stock

Matthiola incana 'Purple'



Purple Stock in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 30 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Spacing: 14 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 6b

Other Names: Brompton Stock

Description:

A biennial or tender perennial producing tall spikes of highly fragrant, purple double flowers in late spring; plants tend to decline under mid-summer temperatures; a popular cut flower

Ornamental Features

Purple Stock features showy spikes of fragrant purple flowers rising above the foliage from late spring to early summer. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its tomentose oval leaves remain grayish green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Purple Stock is an herbaceous biennial 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 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 bees and 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.

Purple Stock is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Purple Stock will grow to be about 24 inches 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. It grows at a fast rate, and tends to be biennial, meaning that it puts on vegetative growth the first year, flowers the second, and then dies.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil type or pH, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Purple Stock 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.