TAGAWA gardens

Palmer's Beard Tongue

Penstemon palmeri



Palmer's Beard Tongue flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 30 inches

Flower Height: 6 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Scented Penstemon, Beardtongue

Description:

An impressive variety, producing large, puffed up white tubular flowers with a tinge of pink and purple streaks, that rise above blue-green foliage; exquisitely fragrant; a beautiful visual impact when massed in the garden, along walkways, or in borders



Palmer's Beard Tongue flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Palmer's Beard Tongue has masses of beautiful spikes of fragrant white tubular flowers with pink overtones and deep purple streaks rising above the foliage from late spring to late summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its succulent pointy leaves remain grayish green in color with hints of powder blue throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Palmer's Beard Tongue is an 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 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, butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Palmer's Beard Tongue is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Palmer's Beard Tongue foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Palmer's Beard Tongue will grow to be about 30 inches tall at maturity extending to 6 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 24 inches apart. 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!

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. This plant does not require much in the way of fertilizing once established. 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 species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by division.

Palmer's Beard Tongue 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.