Balloon Flower

Platycodon grandiflorus

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 18 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 3a

Other Names: Chinese Bellflower, Japanese Bellflower

Description:

A beautiful summer blooming perennial with large buds that resemble balloons that eventually open into saucer shaped stars; great for borders, rock gardens, and containers; a long lasting cut flower



Balloon Flower flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Balloon Flower has masses of beautiful blue bell-shaped flowers with white eyes at the ends of the stems from early to mid summer, which emerge from distinctive navy blue flower buds, and which are most effective when planted in groupings. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its narrow leaves remain dark green in color throughout the season.



Balloon Flower in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Balloon Flower is an herbaceous perennial with a mounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Balloon Flower is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Balloon Flower will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 18 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. The flower stalks can be weak and so it may require staking in exposed sites or excessively rich soils. 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 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. 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.

Balloon Flower is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It can be used either as 'filler' or as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, depending on the height and form of the other plants used in the container planting. 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.