

Fragaria vesca - Growing Guide

Growing Fragaria Vesca

Wild Strawberry

Nothing in the garden gives more pleasure to children than finding and consuming wild strawberries in mid to late summer. *Fragaria vesca* are common European plants that have naturalised from our gardens onto banks and hedgerows over many generations. They are common in wild gardens and are best allowed to naturalise in a specific location that is relatively free of competition from grasses or other more vigorous plants and where they will escape the mower or strimmer while being allowed to flower and fruit at their leisure over several weeks. A hot dry sunny bank is often a suitable place for this naturalisation to take effect. Wild strawberries will however colonise crevasses in patios or rockeries where their stolons or spreading shoots can extend out to colonise new areas.

Wild strawberries can be grown more formally in the border and even surrounded by straw or a light mulch to emphasise the fruit but they are perhaps best left to their own devices to multiply and naturalise into a clump. Our best fruiting clump is in full sun beside a yew tree but this has dangers if children do not know the difference between wild strawberries and poisonous yew berries.

We also, on occasion, offer *Fragaria* 'Pink Panda' on our website. While large pink flowers make this an attractive border plant right through the year it seldom produces any fruit and is therefore only of ornamental value.

Plant wild strawberries in early spring just as they come into growth in a reasonably bare patch of ground over which they can readily spread themselves naturally over time.



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