

Podophyllum - Growing Guide

Growing Podophyllum Versipelle

At the last few Chelsea Flower Shows the herbaceous plant which has attracted the most attention (and orders!) is *P. versipelle* 'Spotty Dotty'. The foliage has a peculiar attraction in itself but the flowers are quite something else!

Podophyllum are shade loving, rhizomatous perennials. 'Spotty Dotty' takes its name from the irregular chocolate brown blotches in its huge deeply lobed leaves. The emerging young leaves are pushed up on leaf stalks and look like tiny folded umbrellas.

The flowers are large and dark red and appear in May or June. They hang singly or in small clusters from below the leaves and you need to pull back the leaves to admire these extraordinary blooms.

These are frost hardy plants but you may prefer to grow them in the greenhouse at first to admire the leaf and flowers. Outside they need a compost rich leafy moist soil in sun or partial shade. We have found that shade is preferable to avoid sun scorching on the leaves. A good winter mulch is advisable if only to keep any weed growth away from your plants when dormant.

'Spotty Dotty' can be divided when dormant and well established to cut off and remove some of the side rhizomes.

Our website will soon be offering a new form of this plant with even more peculiarly coloured leaves.



