

## Astrantia - Growing Guide

### Caring For Astrantia – Masterwort

Astrantia originate from woods and meadows in central and east Europe. They have been much developed and hybridised in cultivation to give an array of different flower colours in newer cultivars.

These plants are clump forming perennials which produce basal rosettes of lobed or palmate leaves. The small flowers appear in erect umbels with five petals above the foliage surrounded by more or less prominent involucres of showy papery bracts.

Astrantia major thrives in a woodland garden where the plants will self-seed themselves profusely if you allow the flower stalks to set seed. In a more moist herbaceous border you will probably want to contain them by removing the flower stalks after flowering. These plants complement astilbe along a streamside.

Astrantia make attractive dried flowers, especially those with pronounced bracts. They need to be cut and dried just before the flowers actually come out.

The varieties of A. major which we offer will tolerate other conditions in a border but a little dappled shade will avoid the risk of them drying up and dying in a very hot summer. A. major 'Sunningdale Variegated' loses the attractive white and yellow variegations in its leaves if it is not grown in full sun.

A. 'Claret' and A. 'Hadspen Blood' have dark red flowers which contrast nicely with their green leaves. The latter must be grown in full sun as the flowers revert to a dull white in shade.

Astrantia can be lifted and divided in spring. The plentiful seed can be sown as soon as it is ripe but this plant will often do it all for you in the

garden. In autumn the plants need tidying up with the old leaves and stems removed to ground level and consigned to the compost heap. In hotter summers you may well be able to do this in August.



*Astrantia* 'Buckland'



*Astrantia carniolica* 'Rubra'



*Astrantia* 'Hadspen Blood'



*Astrantia major* 'Claret'



*Astrantia major* 'Claret'



*Astrantia major* 'Sunningdale Variegated'

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