

Bergenia - Growing Guide

Growing Bergenia

Elephant's ears

Bergenia come in a variety of forms in terms of their leaf and flower colours and in the actual timing of their flowering. They grow as tough thick rhizomes which develop over time and have ovate leathery leaves which colour well in the winter.

These are excellent plants for the spring border where some will flower before or as the leaves emerge while others flower from dense rosettes of leaves. They like a humus rich (ie enhanced) soil which is fairly well drained either in full sun or partial shade. They dislike extreme heat and drought but most will tolerate exposure and poorish soils. Outside the window as I write this there is a clump of *B. cordifolia* which has actually grown out from the border and has settled in nicely to a gravelled driveway. In reality these are pretty tough plants which will perform anywhere that the roots from their chubby rhizomes can reach down into damp soil.

An autumn mulch will do no harm but is not exactly essential. Some species are more evergreen than others although this may depend on the severity of the winter. Frosts may damage early leaves but these plants are easily tough enough to survive. Clumps can easily be divided to remove offsets or the rhizomes can be chopped to create new plants. Large chunks of rhizome can simply be moved and planted elsewhere or rhizomes can be chopped into small sections after flowering with one or more leaf rosette and rooted on a sand bed or in open ground. Quick and easy propagation with very little effort!

B. 'Abendglut' ('Evening Glow') has magenta-crimson flowers on red stems in March and April.



Bergenia 'Abendglut'



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Bergenia 'Abendglut'



B. cordifolia 'Purpurea'



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B. cordifolia 'Purpurea'



B. 'Morgenrote'



B. 'Morgenrote'



B. 'Morgenrote'



B. 'Morgenrote'



B. 'Overture'



B. 'Overture'



B. 'Overture'



B. 'Overture'



B. 'Silberlicht'



B. 'Silberlicht'



B. 'Sunningdale'



B. 'Sunningdale'



B. 'Fire 'n' Ice'



B. 'Fire 'n' Ice'

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