

Berkheya purpurea - Growing Guide

Growing Berkheya Purpurea

South African thistle

This is an attractive summer flowering South African perennial. They are totally hardy and prefer a well-drained position in full sun. The flower heads are around 2ft tall and generally need supports if your herbaceous border is subject to wind especially when the clumps become established and produce multiple flower heads. Badly drained or waterlogged positions may cause the plants to rot.

These are rosette forming plants with oblong or lance shaped leaves of up to 18in in length when mature. The leaves and stems are thistle-like and spiny and the leaves are cottony white below. The 3in flower heads are purplish-white and fade more to white over time.

Berkheyas are tap rooted plants but clumps can readily be divided in the spring. They can however be a bit slow to get going again. Seed can be sown in the cold frame when ripe in the autumn.



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