

Cimicifuga - Growing Guide

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Bugbane, Cohosh

Cimicifuga are entirely hardy clump forming perennials from China, the Far East, and America where they grow in shady grassland or scrub. This genus is closely related to Actaea and also has bottlebrush-like spikes or racemes of flowers which are cream or white. These plants are suitable for the herbaceous border but they can readily be naturalised into a woodland context.

Cimicifuga are however tall growing herbaceous plants which will normally require plant supports except in the most sheltered of locations. They prefer moist conditions in partial shade and clumps can readily be lifted and divided with a spade when dormant. While easy to grow thought needs to be given to their planting positions to get the best effect from their foliage; especially those with colourful brownish-purple leaves and stems.

C. podocarpa (*C. americana*) 'Misty Blue' has blue foliage and white flowers on small reddish stems from midsummer on to autumn. It grows with us to around 3ft.

C. racemosa 'Pink Spike' grows to at least 4 or 5ft in height and has black foliage with flowers which open pink.

C. simplex 'Atropurpurea' has purple-brown leaves and white flowers tinged purple. Grows to 3-4ft.

'Brunette' has dark brownish-purple leaves, purple stems and 8in long compact racemes of purple-tinted off white flowers.

'White Pearl' has pale green leaves, arching stems and racemes of green buds opening to white. The variety grows to 2-3ft in overall height.

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