

Darmera - Growing Guide

Growing Darmera Peltata

This slow spreading rhizomatous perennial, whose home territory is alongside mountain streams in the western USA, has grown away quite happily in a damp glade in the Aucklandii Garden at Caerhays for over 100 years.

The first thing you see in March or April are tall flower stems of 4-6ft in height. The tops of these stems have rounded cymes of numerous five petalled white or light pink flowers and they appear from the bare earth. Only later do the large, peltate leaves grow up and develop. The leaves are dark green and, in maturity, about 2ft across on 5-6ft tall stems. The leaves turn red in autumn before they die down completely to ground level.

While the flowers very occasionally get damaged by late frosts this woodland, bog or herbaceous plant is fully hardy. Although this is really a bog plant it will grow perfectly happily in much drier conditions and certainly in full sun as well as partial shade.

The plant is most easily propagated by lifting and dividing or cutting the fleshy roots when fully dormant in winter.

D. peltata has many uses in the garden and is a good way of shielding and covering an untidy corner. It looks fantastic as a contrasting leaf size alongside *Gunnera manicata* and can be used effectively to create reflections in water.



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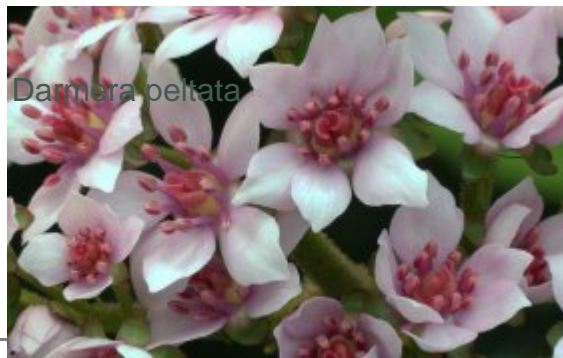
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