

Dodecathon meadia - Growing Guide

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American cowslip, Shooting star

This is an attractive plant well worth its place in the garden and appropriately known as the Shooting star. Dodecathons are damp grassland plants from North America and, as such, totally hardy in the UK. They thrive in damp woodland situations where there is reasonably bare soil and not too much other plant competition. Equally they look fantastic in an alpine garden or at the front of a herbaceous border.

D. meadia is a slowly clump forming perennial which goes completely dormant in winter. The pale green leaves are ovate and toothed growing to about 10in in length. The cyclamen-like flowers appear on straight stems above the plant which has an overall then height of around 15in. The flowers can be variable in colour but are usually a startling magenta pink with long pointed styles.

Clumps can be divided in spring but summer collected ripe seed can be sown in containers in the cold frame as soon as it is ripe.