

Erigeron - Growing Guide

Growing Erigeron

Fleabane

By far the most popular erigeron which we sell is *E. karvinskianthus* (from Mexico) which is more commonly known locally as *E. mucronatus*. It is the most delightfully invasive plant happily seeding and colonising itself in walls and hedges in the nursery (not to mention pots of other things). At Caerhays it materialises high up in gaps in the castle walls where it manages to establish itself wherever it can get behind the lime mortar until we deal with it! It is a carpet spreading plant which has naturalised itself in pavements and banks in most seaside locations. Quite why people need to even purchase it is unclear as tufts pulled from the ground with even a little root will readily re-establish themselves if the growth is trimmed back a little. It seeds everywhere and the seed is easily gathered.

E. mucronatus has yellow centred white daisy flowers in profusion. As I write this I can see clumps producing their first flowers in early May growing in a wall. There will be flowers there until the first frosts especially if you can be bothered to remove the old dead flower heads to avoid the plant wasting energy on seeding.

Another ever popular but larger growing seaside species is *E. glaucus*, Beach aster. This too is a tufted perennial of great garden value but not nearly so invasive. Its leaves look a bit like those of a succulent and it produces a profusion of lilac pink daisy flowers in spring and summer. It will tolerate extreme drought in full sun and thrives in crevices in walls and on top of stone earth bank hedges. It grows to around 12in in height with a spread of double this.

E. 'Dunkelste Aller' ('Darkest of all') is another low growing perennial (24" in height) which is completely hardy. It has dark violet blue-purple flowers with long floret rays.

E. aurantiacus is a bit larger growing than the other varieties offered; achieving around 3ft. As such it may need supports when flowering. The flowers are a brilliant orange with yellow florets over long periods through the summer.

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