

Eupatorium - Growing Guide

Growing Eupatorium

Once again the botanists have intervened to reclassify what have been commonly known for generations as Eupatorium into two separate genera. Eupatorium ligustrinum, the incense bush (also known as Eupatorium micranthum), is now properly classified as Ageratina ligustrina while some of those species of eupatorium which are clump forming perennials remain in the genus. Our catalogue is therefore, strictly speaking, incorrect but there comes a point where the decisions of scientists and botanists cause so much confusion for our customers that we have chosen to stick with tradition in our catalogue. There are certainly marked differences between shrubby and perennial species of Eupatorium but the flowers, and their value as garden plants, is much the same.

Eupatorium ligustrinum is a most excellent evergreen shrub which, after 20 years with us, is now a shrub of 5-6ft with a similar spread. Although it originates from Mexico and Costa Rica we have found it to be extremely tolerant of salt laden gales and, with us, it grows in a frost pocket near a lake. In September or October E. ligustrinum produces numerous flat heads of small white flowers above its glossy green leaves. Those flowers attract butterflies in profusion especially fritillaries and red admirals. It therefore has a very special place in a butterfly garden long after Buddleia flowers are over.



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E. maculatum 'Atropurpureum', Joe Pye weed, grows up to 6ft in height with stiff upright stems suffused purple. The flower heads are 4-6in across and are pinkish or whitish. *E. rugosum* 'Chocolate' (which is now annoyingly reclassified as *Ageratina altissima*) grows to a similar height and has lance shaped to ovate grey-green leaves. Both these perennial forms of *Eupatorium* grow well in alkaline as well as acidic soil.



Eupatorium maculatum
'Atropurpureum'



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Eupatorium rugosum
'Chocolate'



Eupatorium rugosum
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