

Gillenia - Growing Guide

Growing Gillenia Trifoliata

Bowman's root

I first spotted this attractive herbaceous plant growing in the superbly well laid out and named herbaceous borders at Lanhydrock gardens near Bodmin. Since then I have seen it at Osborne House in the Isle of Wight as a standout feature plant in their borders. In fact it is one of those plants which I have no idea why it took us so long to include it in our catalogue.

G. trifoliata grows as a spreading rhizomatous plant with erect stems up to around 3ft in height. It is a sturdy and fully hardy perennial which spreads quickly to establish a big clump. It does not seem to need plant supports in sheltered locations as the multiple stems usually each support themselves. In windy locations this might not be the case.

The individual stems are branched and red tinted with toothed and conspicuously veined bronze-green leaves and long leaflets. A multitude of white or pinkish-white flowers with narrow petals and red tinted calyces appear from late spring and carry on in profusion until late summer.

G. trifoliata can be grown well in full sun or in shade and are excellent for cutting. They can even be let loose to naturalise as clumps in a woodland context.

The simplest method of propagation is by lifting and dividing dormant clumps. As late autumn approaches and the plant finishes flowering it needs chopping back to ground level and the dead stems consigned to the compost heap.



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