

Rehmannia - Growing Guide

Growing Rehmannia Elata

Chinese foxglove

This is a completely hardy perennial border plant which we have only recently started to grow here in the nursery. Having seen it looking wonderful in the walled garden at Osborne House near Cowes it then became a welcome new addition. Its common name as the Chinese foxglove gives you a fair idea of its flower shape but this plant only really gives its best after our common native foxgloves are almost over.

R. elata flowers over a long period from July well on into autumn. Despite its looks, it is a fully hardy border plant. It likes a sunny location, probably at the edge of a border, and some support is advisable when the plant has developed into a decent clump with a number of flowering spikes which will eventually reach 3-5ft in height. Avoid waterlogged locations or those which remain boggy over winter as *R. elata* dislikes such situations. Here it may be sensible to pot up part of the clump when dormant in the autumn and keep it overwintered in the greenhouse to avoid any root rot risks.

The leaves are lobed or toothed with conspicuously veined and hairy basal leaves. The flower spikes have semi-pendant flowers which can vary a little in colour from pinkish to purple with paler tubes and red spotting in the throats of the flowers.

A hot dry border will reduce any potential slug damage to this plant as it starts to grow in early summer. It roots easily from early season softwood cuttings or you can propagate it from root cuttings lifted in the autumn.



Rehmannia 'Walberton Magic Dragon'



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