

Verbena bonariensis - Growing Guide

Growing Verbena Bonariensis

This is deservedly one of Burncoose's bestsellers and this has been the case for many years. It is one of the few herbaceous plants which will, once established, flower away right through from late summer and long into the autumn. In my daily online garden diary I have even featured a few tail end flowers at Caerhays around Christmas in a mild Cornish autumn with no frost.

V. bonariensis (also known as *V. patagonica*) comes from South America and is something which I have observed in roadside verges and field edges in Argentina. Despite its origins it is perfectly frost hardy down to -10° for short periods and, if it does get clipped by frost before it has completely died down, it will readily reshoot again from the base in late spring the following year.

This is a stiff upright clump forming perennial with rough (to the touch) branching stems which can achieve 5-6ft in height when mature. Unless you grow it beside or through other shrubs this is something which needs a proper tall circular metal plant support. Our friends, Harrod Horticultural, from Lowestoft provide just the thing as you can see on our and their websites.

The leaves are wrinkled and oblong with toothed margins and hairs beneath. The flowers are lilac purple in panicles or cymes which can be 2in across. The flowers go on and on! For best results grow *V. bonariensis* in full sun in a moist but well drained location. Our best clump receives extra water from a downpipe drain which often overflows onto the nearby plants.

Propagation is easy and the plant readily self-seeds itself in a border without any prompting. Stem tip cuttings root easily and quickly in August to September. You can also divide the semi-dormant clumps of roots in

the spring. As it is so easy to propagate one wonders why Burncoose sells so many but it is one of those plants whose popularity is deserved and enduring.



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