

Veronicastrum virginicum - Growing Guide

Growing Veronicastrum Virginicum

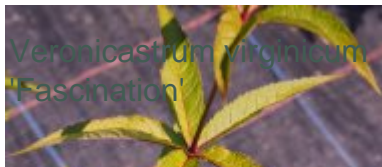
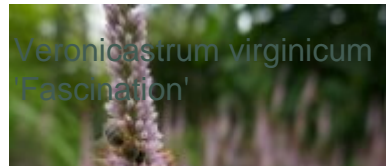
Culver's root

Veronicastrum virginicum originates from North America where it grows in open woodland, prairies and meadows. This makes it fully hardy in UK conditions and a welcome addition to a mixed summer flowering border.

V. virginicum is an erect growing perennial with unbranched stems and lance-shaped, pointed dark green leaves. The leaves appear in whorls up the stem. The flower spikes appear from midsummer on into early autumn and the overall height of this plant in flower can be as much as 6ft. It is therefore a useful plant for adding height to the back of the border later in the year.

V. virginicum 'Fascination' has spikes of small violet blue flowers. Individual flowers have protruding stamens and the flowers appear in dense terminal racemes. The flowers on each flower spike open from the base upwards and there can be a period of several days or weeks between the flowers finishing at the base while those at the tip are still in tight bud.

This plant is best grown in full sun but it will do well also in partial shade. It will tolerate most soils providing they remain moist. Propagation by division of dormant clumps is straightforward or ripe and fresh seed can be sown in the cold frame in the autumn. In wet weather and when in full growth downy mildew can be an issue but the affected leaves can easily be removed and the flower spikes will be unaffected.



Burncoose Nurseries: Gwennap, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 6BJ
Telephone: +44 (0) 1209 860316 Fax: +44 (0) 1209 860011 Email: info@burncoose.co.uk
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