



# Top 50 Plants for a White Garden Plants for Pollinators

White flowering plants to create a sweet-scented, serene garden loved by insects both by day and by night

**List Curated by Thomas McBride**

From research data collected and collated at the  
National Botanic Garden of Wales

NB: Butterflies and Moths are not studied at the NBGW so any data on nectar plants beneficial for them is taken from Butterfly Conservation



# Introduction



A White Garden is a perfect way to create a more serene, peaceful section within a larger garden. It can work well enclosed with hedges if you have a medium-sized garden with several garden 'rooms' or as a much larger open space within a large garden. If you have a smaller garden, you may wish simply to use this list to pick white flowers to grow in your border. A white garden is usually a year-round investment so, unlike a hot border, it is great to select flowers that will cover all or most of the seasons, hence, a wide variety are included on this list including a few larger shrubs. White gardens usually work best in fairly dry, well draining soil but may be sunny or in partial shade.

## Plants



As with most gardens, choosing a variety of plants of different heights is important. Place shrubs and tall perennials at the back of the border and smaller plants towards the front. White flowers often have a strong scent as it makes up for the lack of petal colour to attract pollinators. Keep scent in mind when choosing plants as it can add an additional level to your garden. Many of these plants will also attract moths and nocturnal insects.

# Guide to using these pages:

## Map

Maps depict the native area of the plant (in green)  
They also show areas the plant is naturalised (in purple)

All maps shown are derived from 'Plants of the World Online'; courtesy of Kew Gardens

Flowering Period (this is when it is good for pollinators!)

Plant Family

Growing habit and mature size of the plant

Latin Binomial Name

*Delphinium elatum*

Common English Name

Candle Larkspur

Photograph of the plant in flower



Insect groups known to favour the nectar of this plant

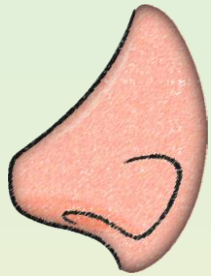


Useful knowledge or warnings about the plant

White cultivars of this species, mostly AGM but some are simply popular cultivars

# Key to these Pages

Additional information on these garden plants



The flowers and/or leaves have a Pleasant scent

This plant would only be suitable for meadow-style planting



Plant is often used in traditional Herbal Remedies



The plant has edible parts that are commonly eaten or used in cooking



## Warnings



Plant tissue is highly toxic if ingested



Sap may cause irritation (Wash hands after touching or avoid touching)

# Temperature

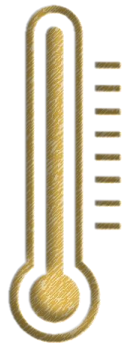
Some of the plants listed in our Top 200 are not fully hardy in all or some parts of the United Kingdom.

Plants without a thermometer symbol are fully hardy in the severest UK Winter; equating to **H5** or hardier.

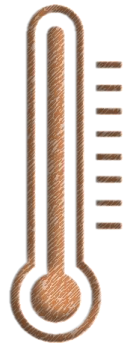
Plants with a coloured thermometer symbol are hardy to varying degrees as follows:



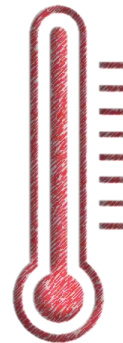
Almost Hardy  
**(H4)**



Half-Hardy  
**(H3)**



Not Frost Hardy  
**(H2)**



Not Hardy  
**(H1)**

## RHS Hardiness Scale

<b>H1a</b>	-	<b>Above 15°C</b>
<b>H1b</b>	-	<b>Minimum 10°C</b>
<b>H1c</b>	-	<b>Minimum 5°C</b>
<b>H2</b>	-	<b>Minimum 1°C</b>
<b>H3</b>	-	<b>Minimum -5°C</b>
<b>H4</b>	-	<b>Minimum -10°C</b>
<b>H5</b>	-	<b>Minimum -15°C</b>

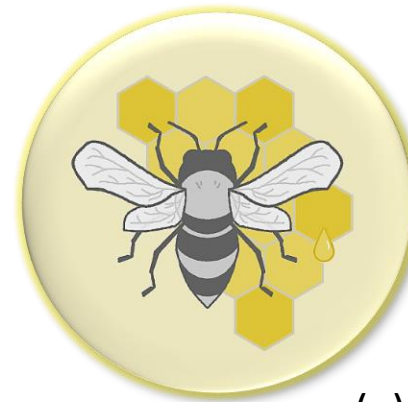
# Pollinators

Our data on pollinators has been collected from studies spanning over a decade. Pollinator symbols appear when plants are proven to be good nectar plants for certain insects.

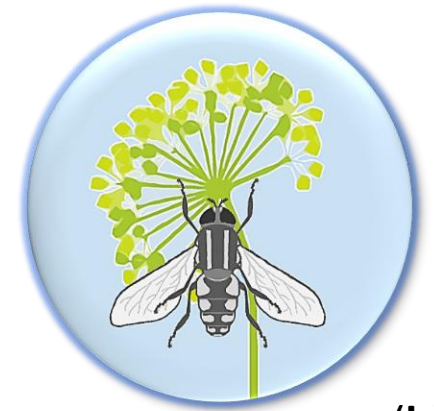
It should be noted that all bee and hoverfly data is ours but lepidoptera data is taken from Butterfly Conservation.

Our data spans a wide range of different insect species. For simplicity, these species have been condensed into six easy icons to represent them:

- |               |                                    |                  |
|---------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| a) Honeybees  | c) Bumblebees                      | e) Moths         |
| b) Hoverflies | d) Butterflies<br>(Includes Moths) | f) Solitary Bees |



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



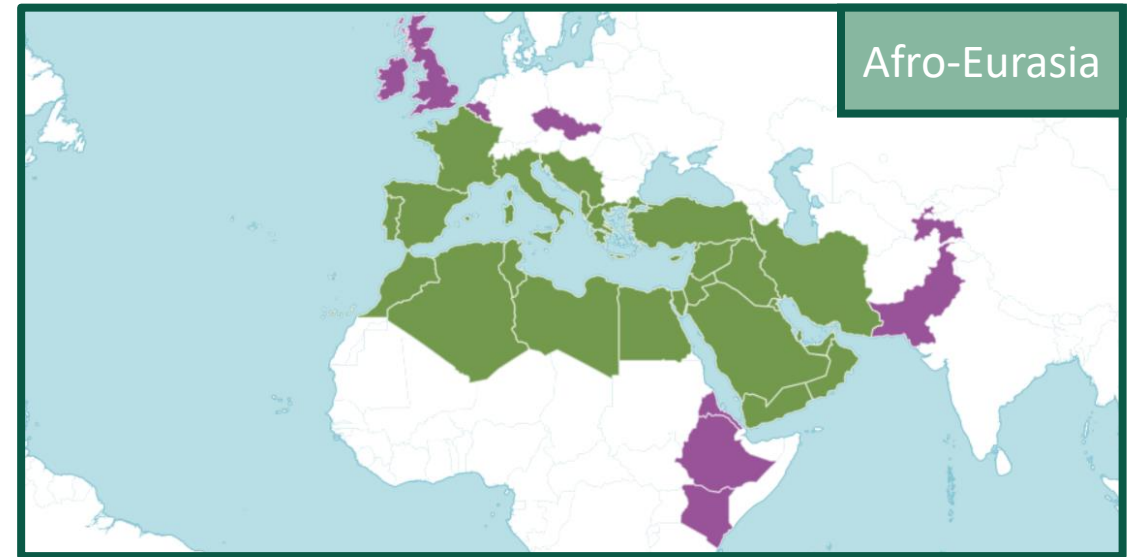
(e)



(f)

# *Ammi majus*

## Bishop's Weed



- Species -  
'Graceland'



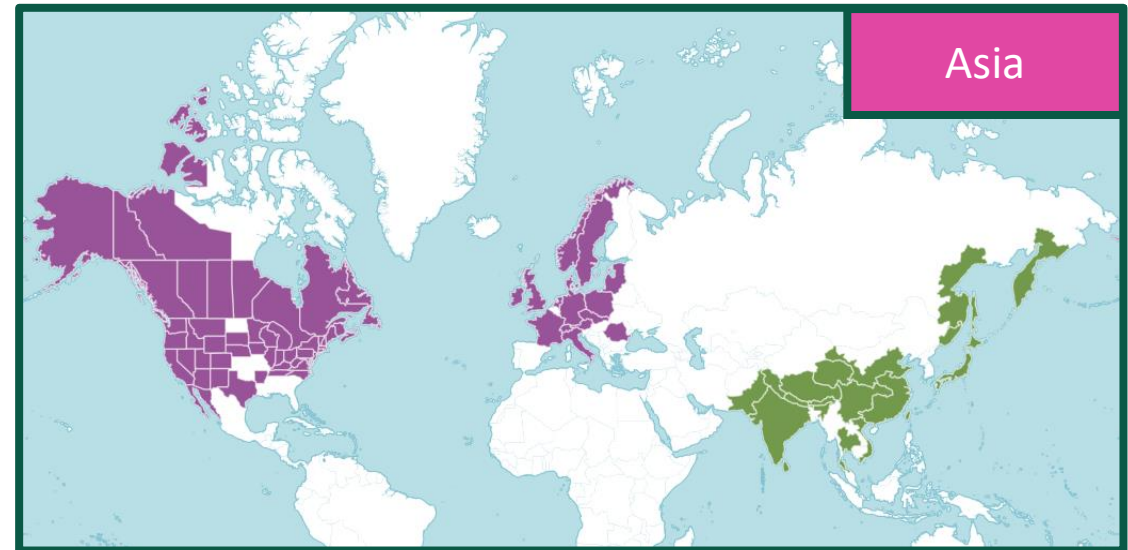
Summer ☀

Apiaceae  
Carrot Family

3ft Annual

# *Anaphalis margaritacea*

## Pearly Everlasting



Related species: *Anaphalis triplinervis*

'Sommerschnee'

- Species -

RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

Summer ☀

Asteraceae  
Daisy Family

2ft Perennial



# *Anemone hupehensis* var. *japonica*

## Japanese Anemone



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Sen Itto

'Honorine Jobert'  
'Whirlwind' (Not AGM)



Summer ☀

Ranunculaceae  
Buttercup Family

3ft Perennial

# *Anemone nemorosa*

## Wood Anemone



Photograph © Thomas McBride

- Species -



Spring 

Ranunculaceae  
Buttercup Family

<1ft Tuberos

# *Anthriscus sylvestris*

## Cow Parsley



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Jorick Homan

- Species - (Not AGM)  
'Ravenswing' (Not AGM)



Late Spring  
- Early Summer

Apiaceae  
Carrot Family

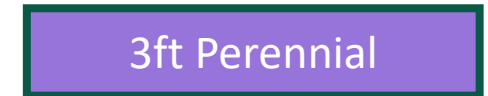
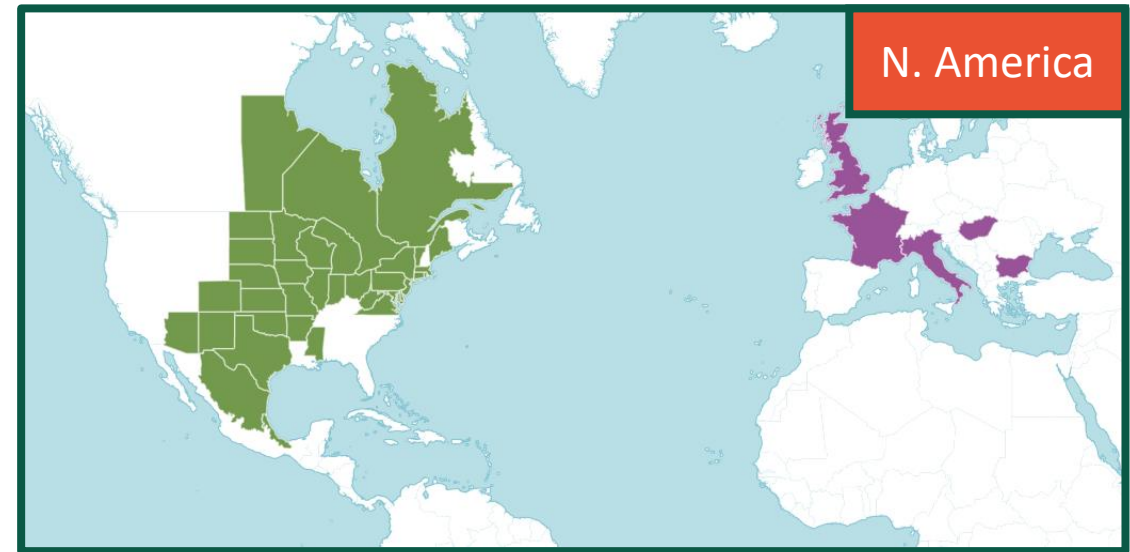
4ft Perennial

# *Aster ericoides*

## White Heath Aster

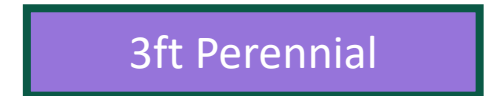
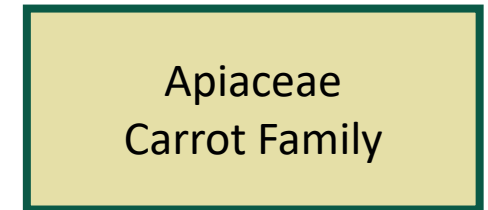
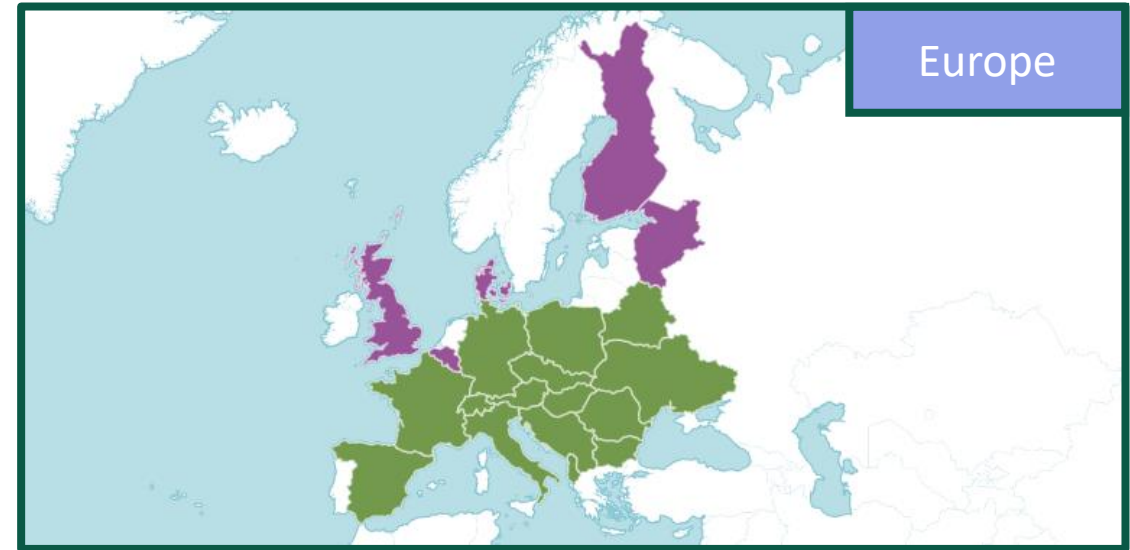


Photograph from Wikipedia (CC) Cody Hough



# *Astrantia major*

## Great Masterwort

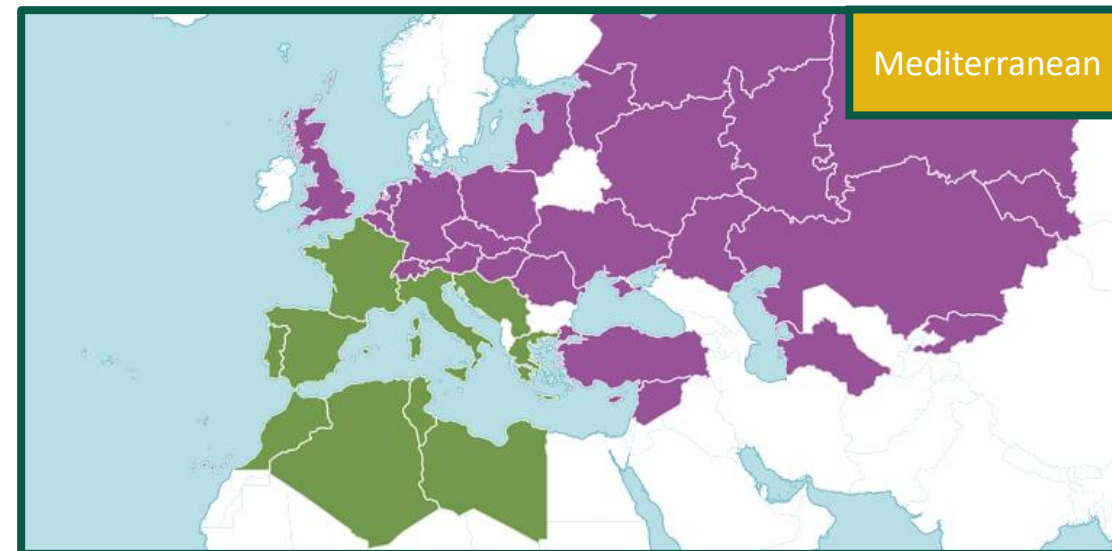


# *Borago officinalis*

## Common Borage



Photograph from PlantSam (CC) Frau Doktor



'Alba' (Not AGM)



Late Spring  
- Midsummer



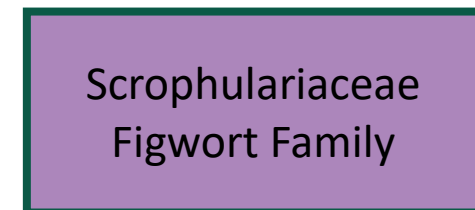
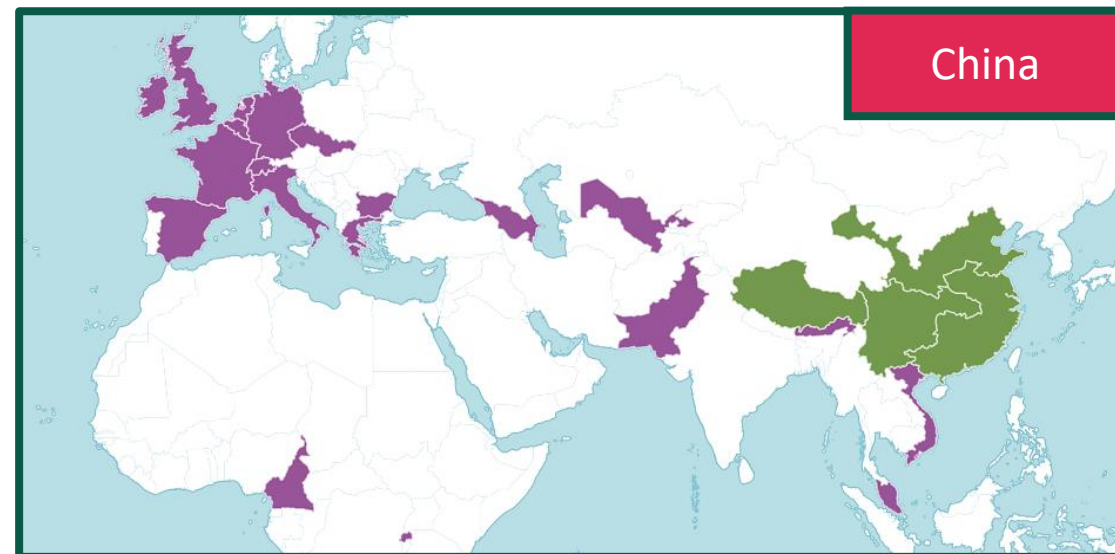
Boraginaceae  
Borage Family



2ft Annual

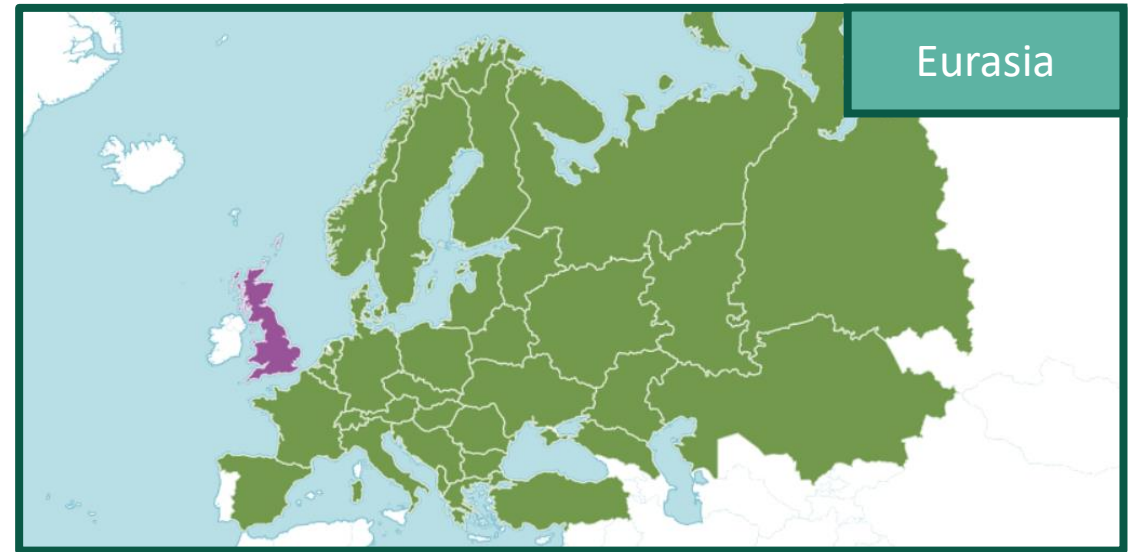
# *Buddleja davidii*

## Common Butterfly Bush



# *Campanula persicifolia*

## Peach-leaved Bellflower



'Alba' (Not AGM)  
'Chettle Charm'  
(Not AGM)



Summer ☀

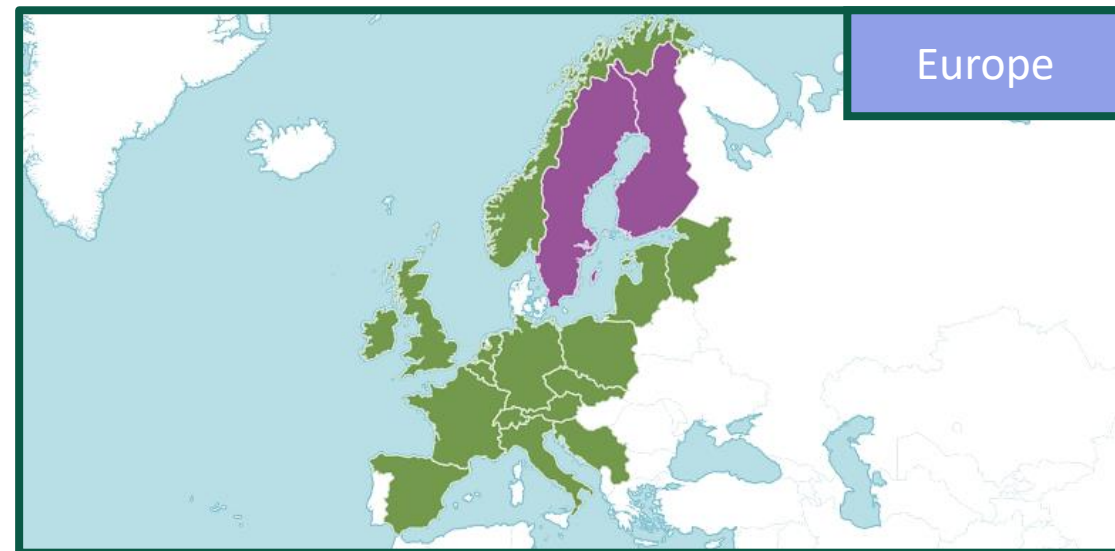
Campanulaceae  
Bellflower Family

2ft Perennial



# *Centaurea montana*

## Perennial Cornflower



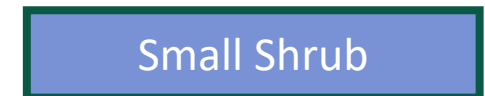
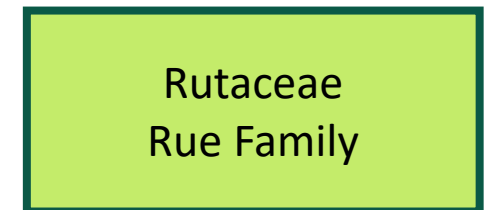
Photograph from Flickr (CC) Brenda Dobbs



# *Choisya x dewitteana*

## Garden Mexican Orange Blossom

*Choisya arizonica* x *Choisya ternata*



# *Cistus ladanifer*

## Gum Rock-rose, Laudanum



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Zoë



- Species - (Not AGM)  
Related hybrid:  
**C. x cyprius**



Summer ☀

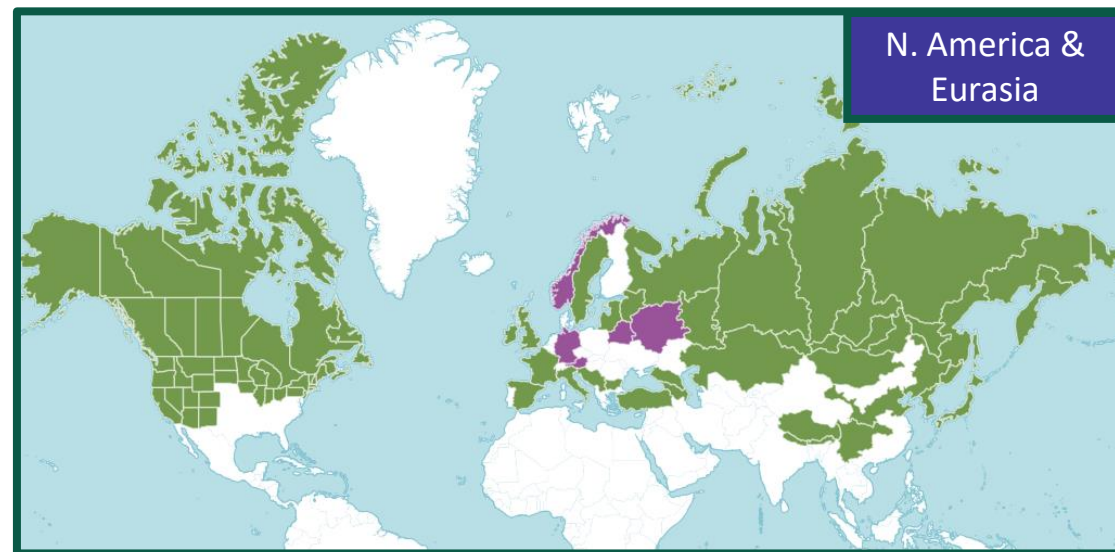
Cistaceae  
Rock-rose Family

Medium Shrub

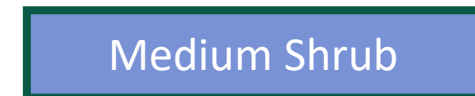
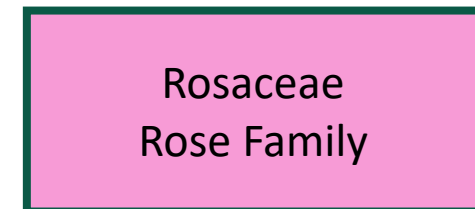
\* This plant will not survive below -10°C night temperatures, protect from very harsh winter nights

# *Dasiphora fruticosa*

## Garden Potentilla



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Stehmetz Barger



# *Delphinium elatum*

## Candle Larkspur



'Elizabeth Cook'  
'Jill Curley'



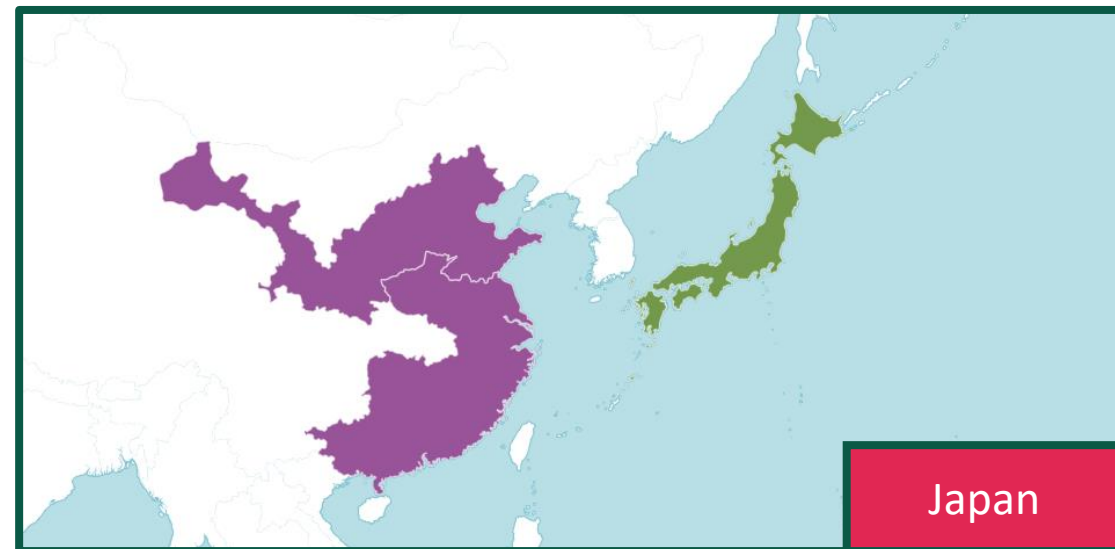
Summer ☀

Ranunculaceae  
Buttercup Family

5ft Perennial

# *Deutzia gracilis*

## Japanese Snow Flower



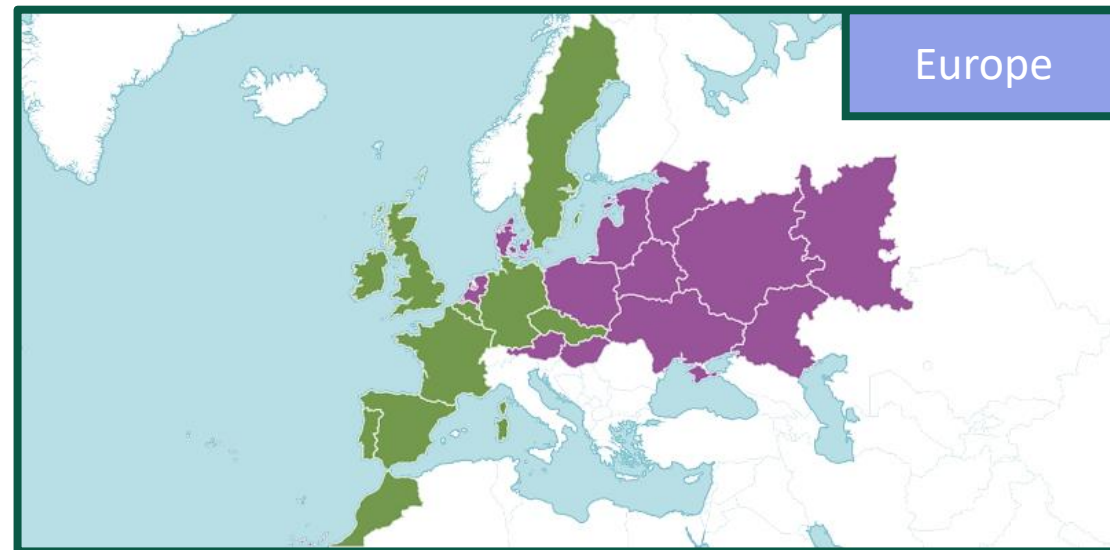
Mid Spring  
- Early Summer

Hydrangeaceae  
Hydrangea Family

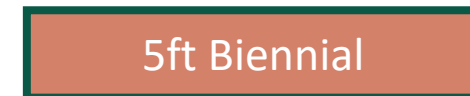
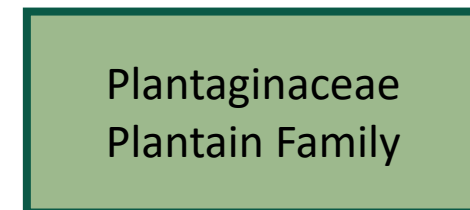
Medium Shrub

# *Digitalis purpurea*

## Common Foxglove



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Aaron Carlson



# *Erigeron karvinskianus*

## Mexican Fleabane



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Sumana Khanom

-Species-



The logo for the RHS Award of Garden Merit, featuring a green circular emblem with a white trophy in the center and the text "RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT" around the perimeter. To the right of the emblem is a stylized white tree icon.

Summer ☀

Asteraceae  
Daisy Family

1ft Perennial

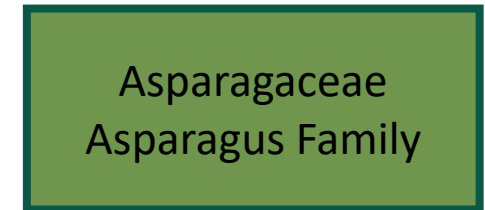
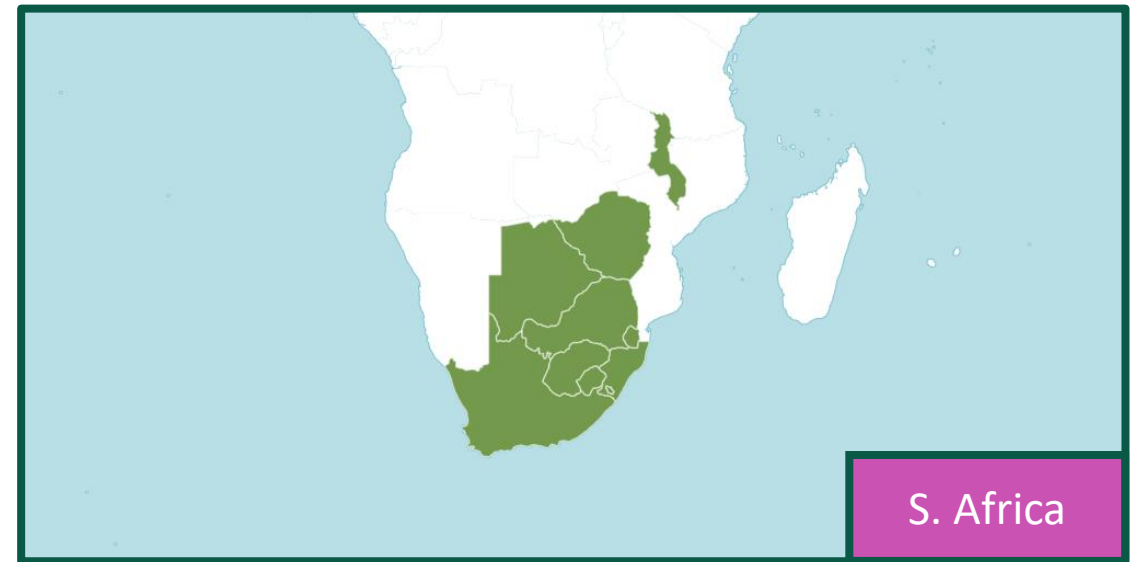


# *Eucomis autumnalis*

## Autumn Pineapple-lily



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Thistle Garden



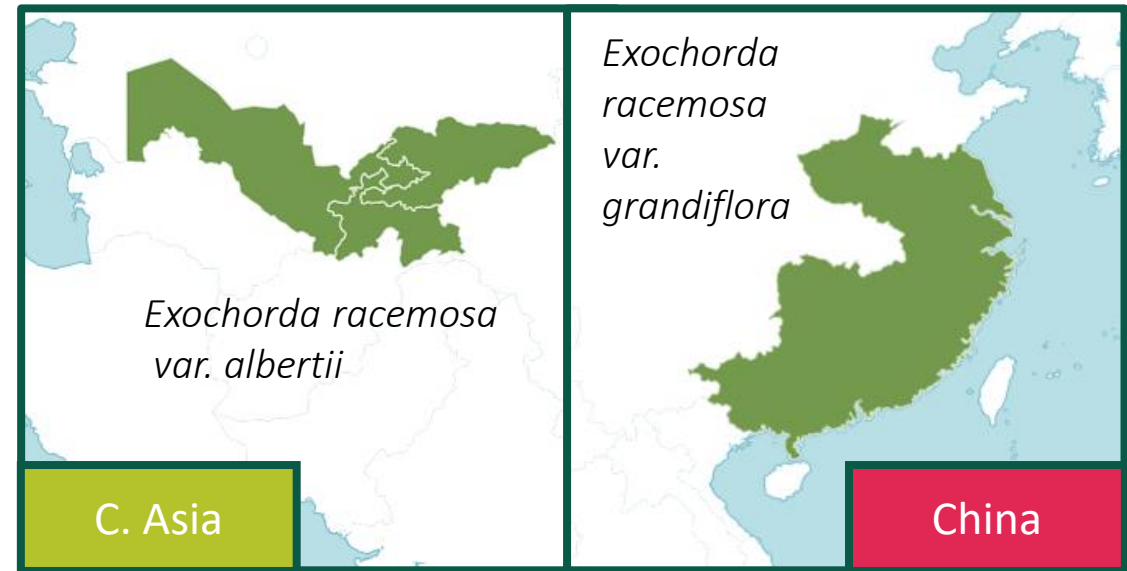
# *Exochorda x macrantha*

## Garden Pearlbush

*Exochorda albertii* x *Exochorda grandiflora*\*



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Tim Waters



‘The Bride’  
‘Snow Day’ (Not AGM)



Late Spring  
- Early Summer

Rosaceae  
Rose Family

Medium Shrub

\* The two parents were originally considered separate species due to geographic separation, however, genetic studies show they might simply be different variants of *Exochorda racemosa*

# *Fatsia japonica*

## Japanese Aralia



- Species -  
'Variegata'



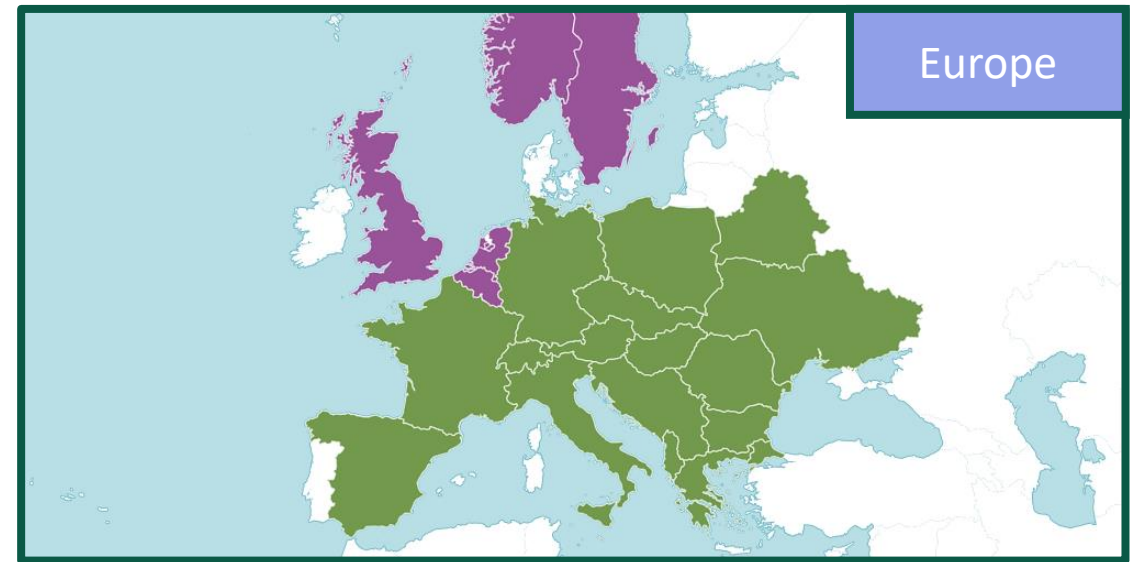
Autumn 

Araliaceae  
Ivy Family

Medium Shrub

# *Galanthus nivalis*

## Common Snowdrop



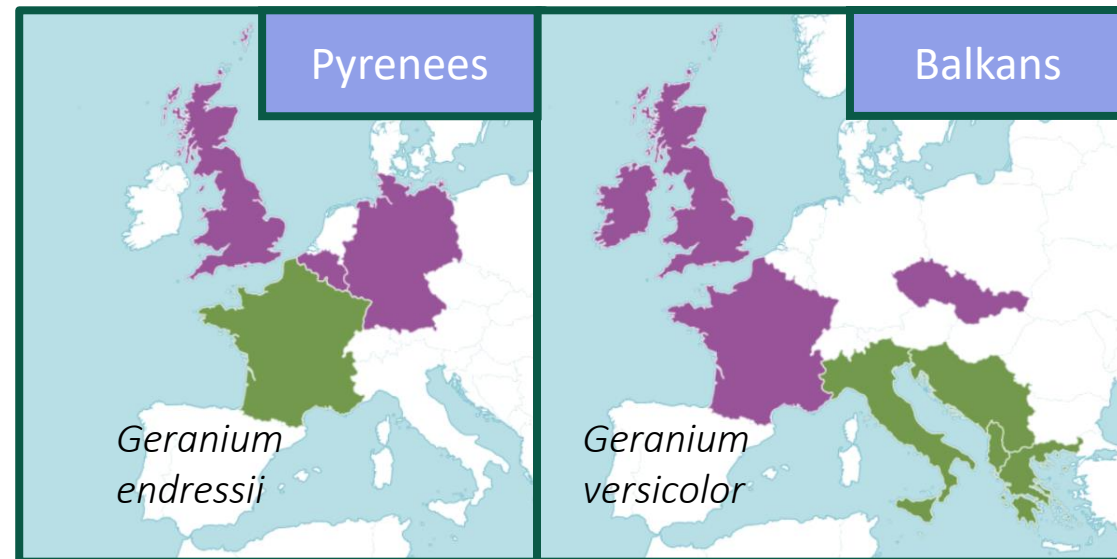
# *Geranium x oxonianum*

## Oxford Cranesbill

*Geranium endressii* x *Geranium versicolor*



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Kerry Woods



'Rebecca Moss' (Not AGM)

'Wageningen'



Late Spring –  
Early Autumn

Geraniaceae  
Cranesbill Family

2ft Perennial

# *Helleborus orientalis*

Lenten-rose



Helleborus x hybridus

'Pebworth White'

'Albus' (Both Not AGM)



Midwinter  
- Mid Spring

Ranunculaceae  
Buttercup Family

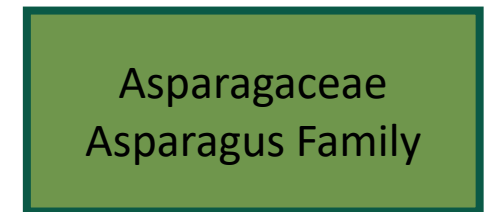
2ft Perennial

# *Hyacinthus orientalis*

## Garden Hyacinth



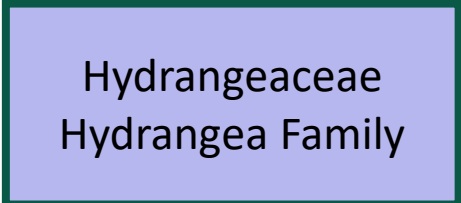
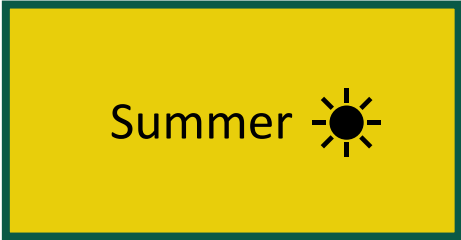
Photograph from Flickr (CC) Katy Wrathall



\* This plant will not survive below -10°C night temperatures, protect bulbs from very harsh winter nights

# *Hydrangea paniculata*

## Panicked Hydrangea





# *Hydrangea quercifolia*

## Oak-leaved Hydrangea



‘Snow Queen’  
‘Snowflake’



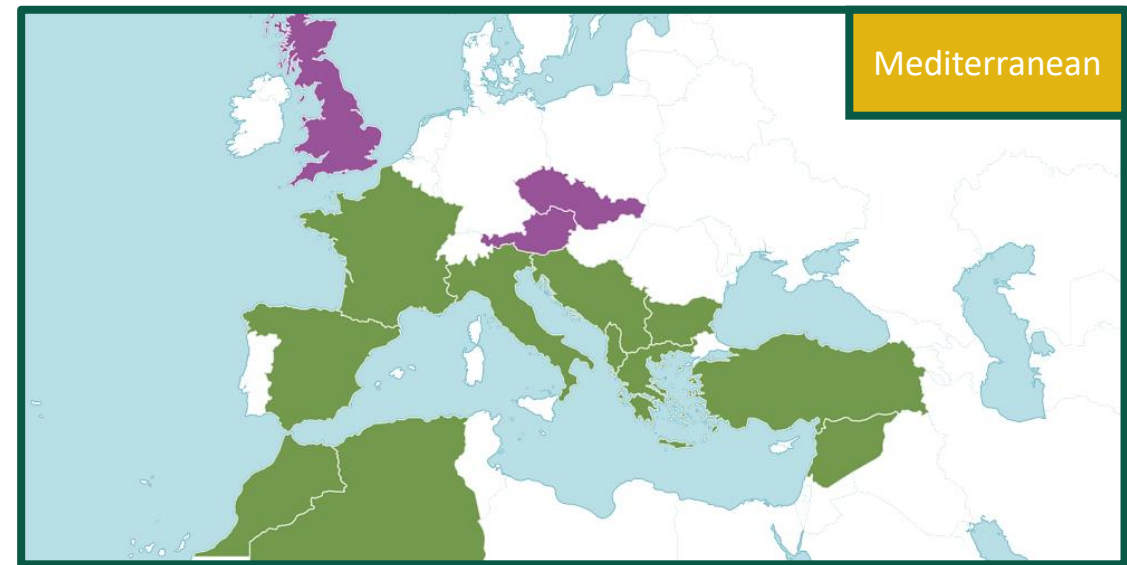
Summer ☀

Hydrangeaceae  
Hydrangea Family

Medium Shrub

# *Iberis sempervirens*

## Perennial Candytuft



'Appen Etz' (Not AGM)  
'Snowflake'



Late Spring  
- Midsummer

Brassicaceae  
Mustard Family

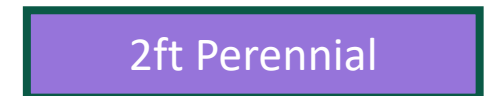
1ft Perennial

# *Lamprocapnos spectabilis*

## Bleeding Heart



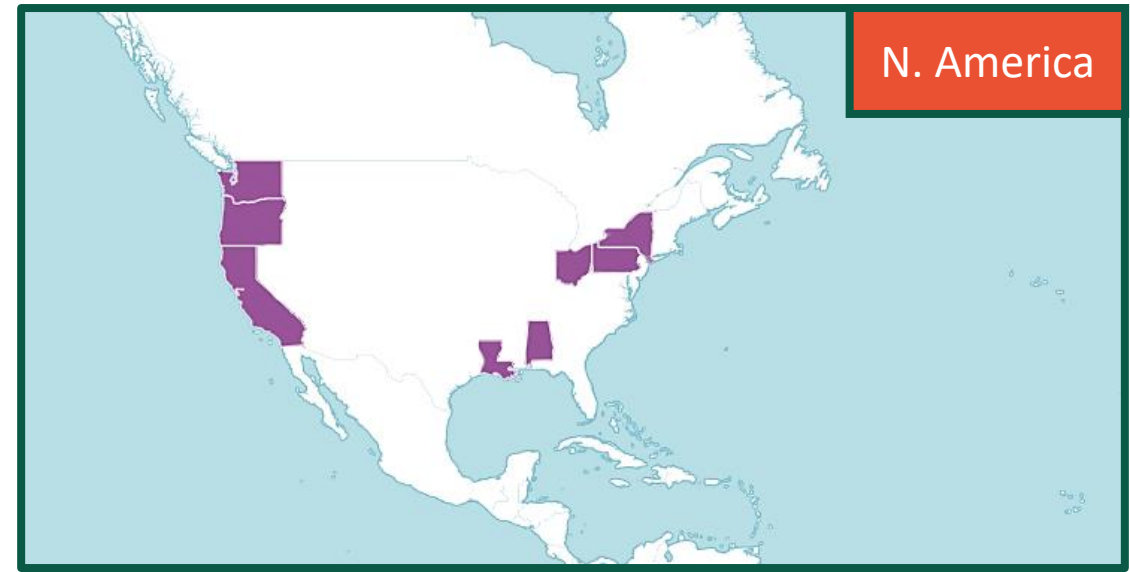
Photograph from Flickr (CC) Kerry Woods



# *Leucanthemum x superbum*

## Shasta Daisy

Complex Hybrid\*



Midsummer  
- Early Autumn

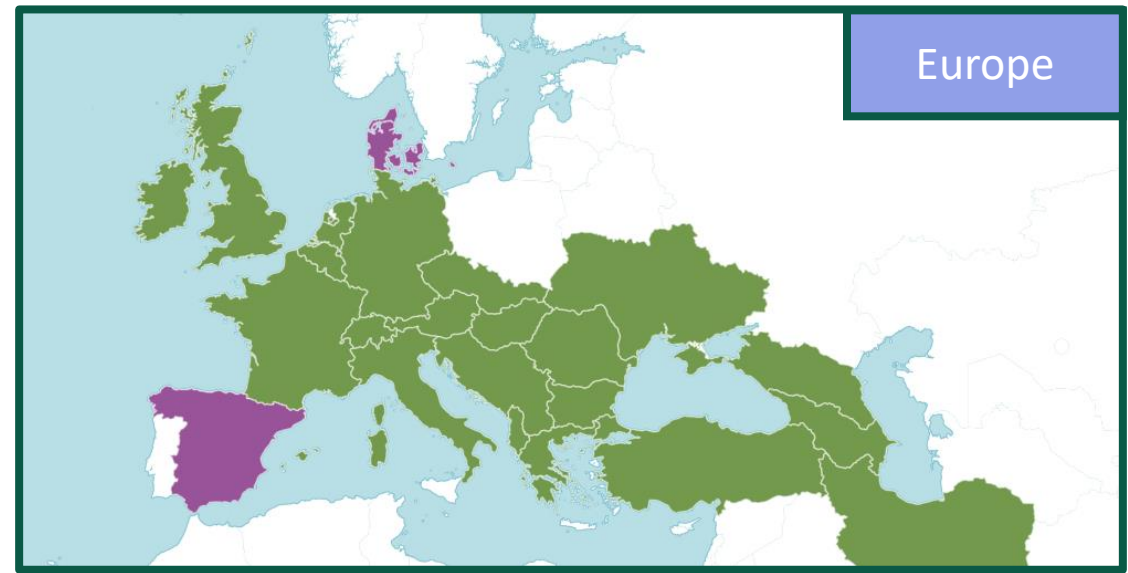
Asteraceae  
Daisy Family

4ft Perennial

\* Map therefore shows naturalised regions as there is no native region

# *Leucojum aestivum*

## Summer Snowflake



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Takashi Hososhima

'Gravetye Giant'  
- Species - (Not AGM)

The logo for the RHS Award of Garden Merit, featuring a green cup and saucer inside a circular border with the text "RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT" and a registered trademark symbol. To the right is a stylized tree icon.

Spring A black silhouette of a tulip flower.

Amaryllidaceae  
Daffodil Family

1ft Bulbous

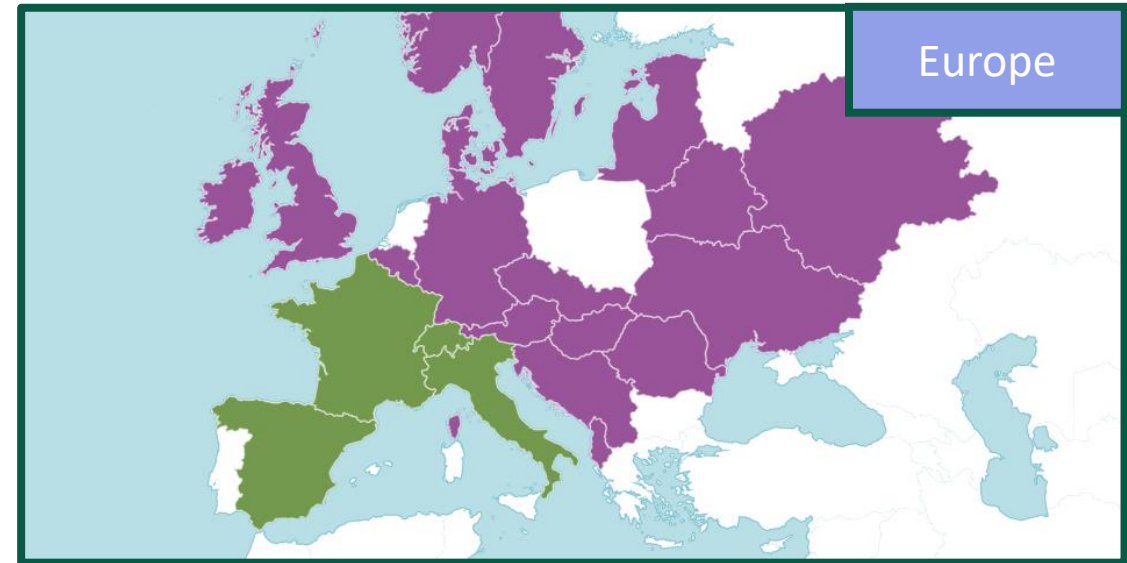
# *Lilium candidum*

## Madonna Lily



# *Lunaria annua*

## Honesty



*Var. albiflora*  
'Alba variegata'



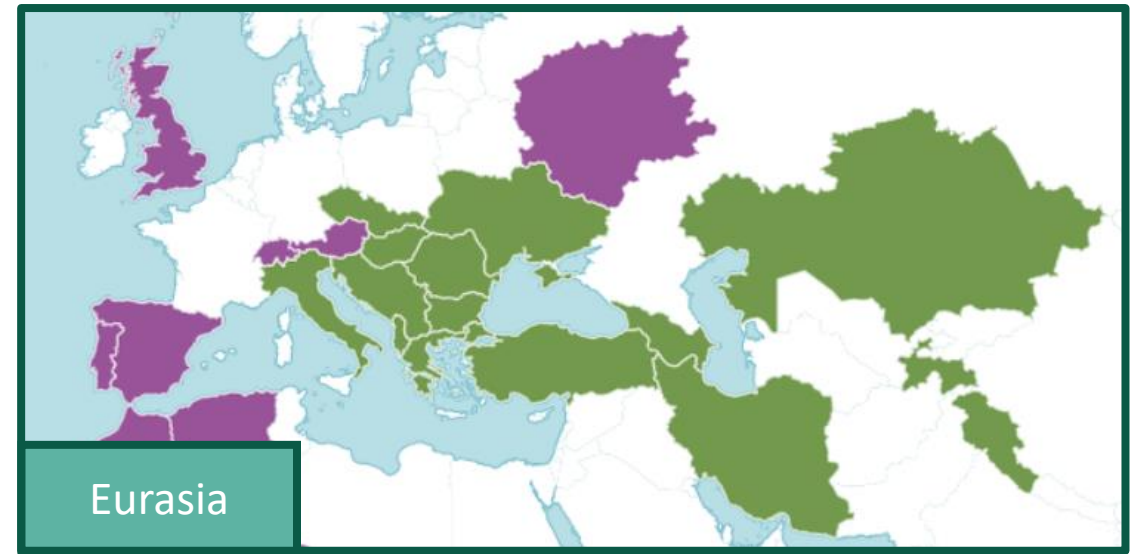
Late Spring  
- Early Summer

Brassicaceae  
Mustard Family

3ft Biennial / Annual

# *Lychnis coronaria*

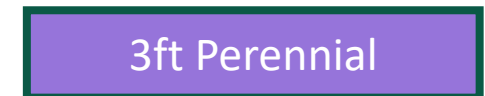
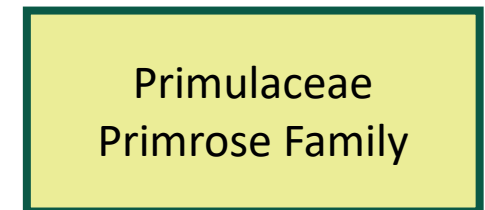
## Rose Campion





# *Lysimachia clethroides*

## Gooseneck Loosestrife

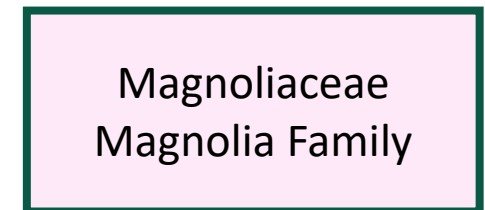


# *Magnolia stellata*

## Star Magnolia

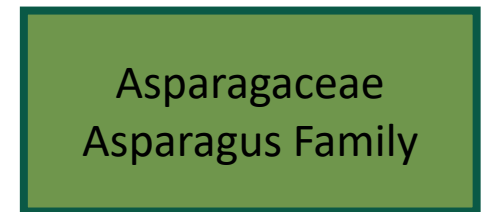
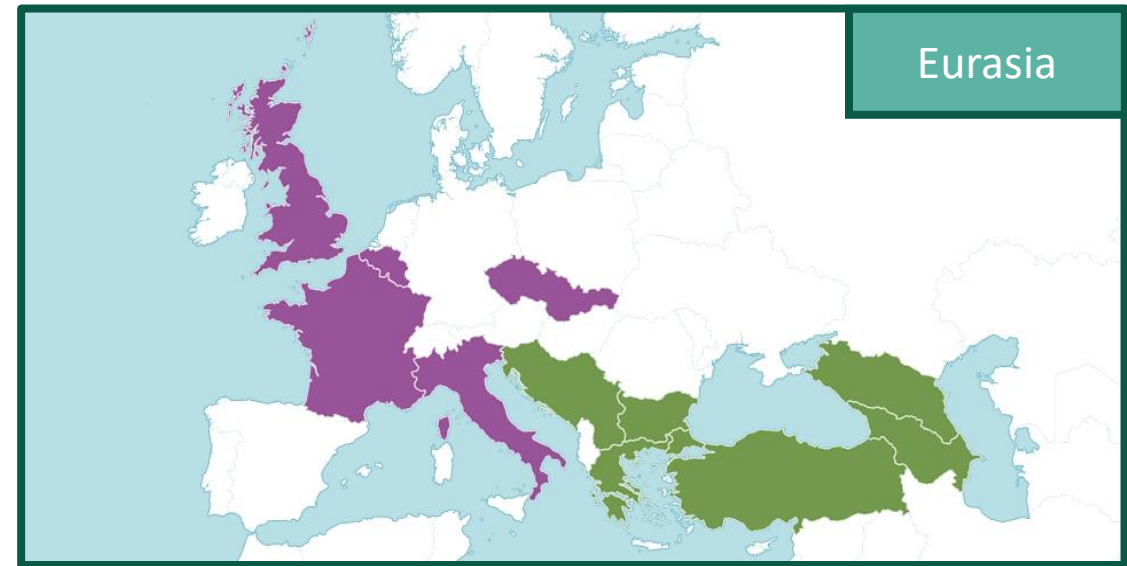


Photograph from Flickr (CC) Ting Chen



# *Muscari armeniacum*

## Garden Grape-Hyacinth

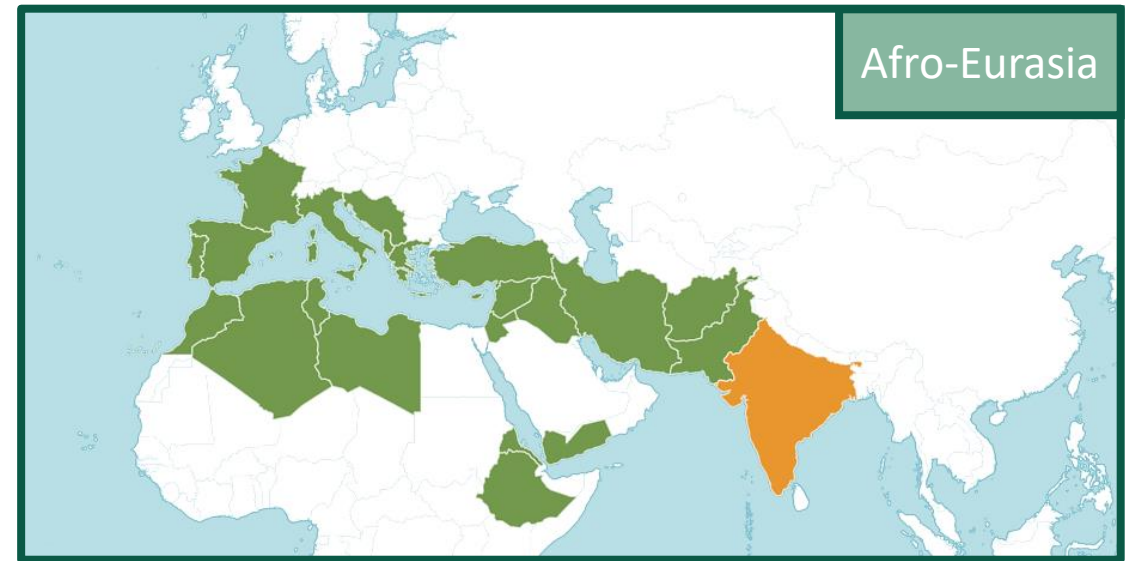


# *Myrtus communis*

## Common Myrtle



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Tim Waters



- Species -  
*Ssp. tarentina*



Midsummer  
- Early Autumn

Myrtaceae  
Myrtle Family

Small Shrub

\* This plant will not survive below -10°C night temperatures, protect from very harsh winter nights

# *Paeonia lactiflora*

## Chinese Paeony



*Photograph from Flickr (CC) Linda de Volder*



'Miss America'  
'Whitleyi Manor'



Late Spring  
- Early Summer

Paeoniaceae  
Paeony Family

3ft Perennial

# *Papaver orientale*

## Oriental Poppy



Anatolia & Caucasus

'Black & White'  
'Royal Wedding'  
(Not AGM)



Late Spring  
- Midsummer

Papaveraceae  
Poppy Family

2ft Perennial

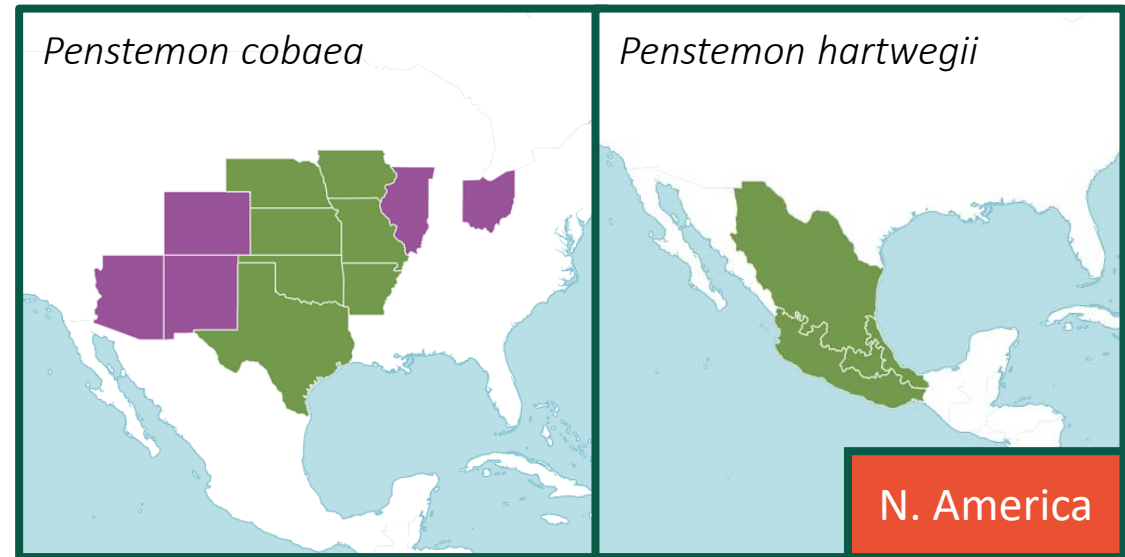
# *Penstemon x gloxinoides*

## Garden Penstemon

*Penstemon cobaea* x *Penstemon hartwegii*



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Manuel M Vicente



'Wedding Day'  
'White Bedder'  
(Neither are AGM)

RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT

Midsummer  
- Early Autumn

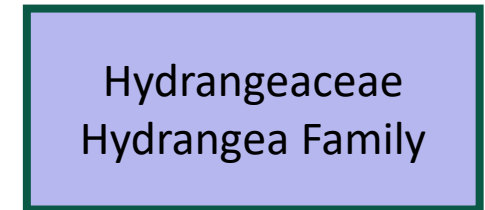
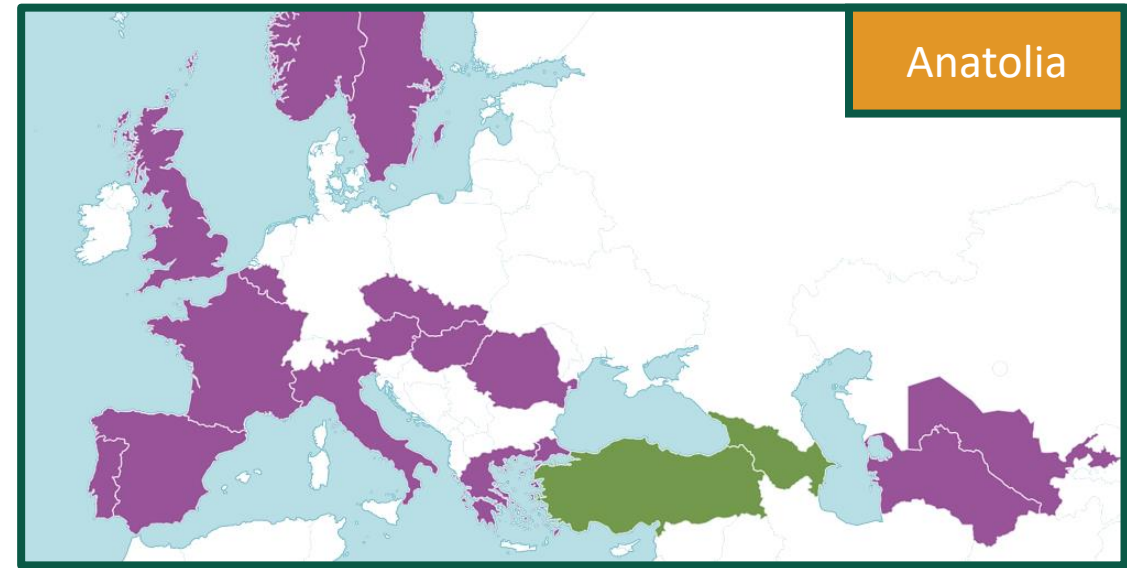
Plantaginaceae  
Plantain Family

2ft Perennial

\* This plant will not survive below -10°C night temperatures, protect from very harsh winter nights

# *Philadelphus coronarius*

## Sweet Mock-orange



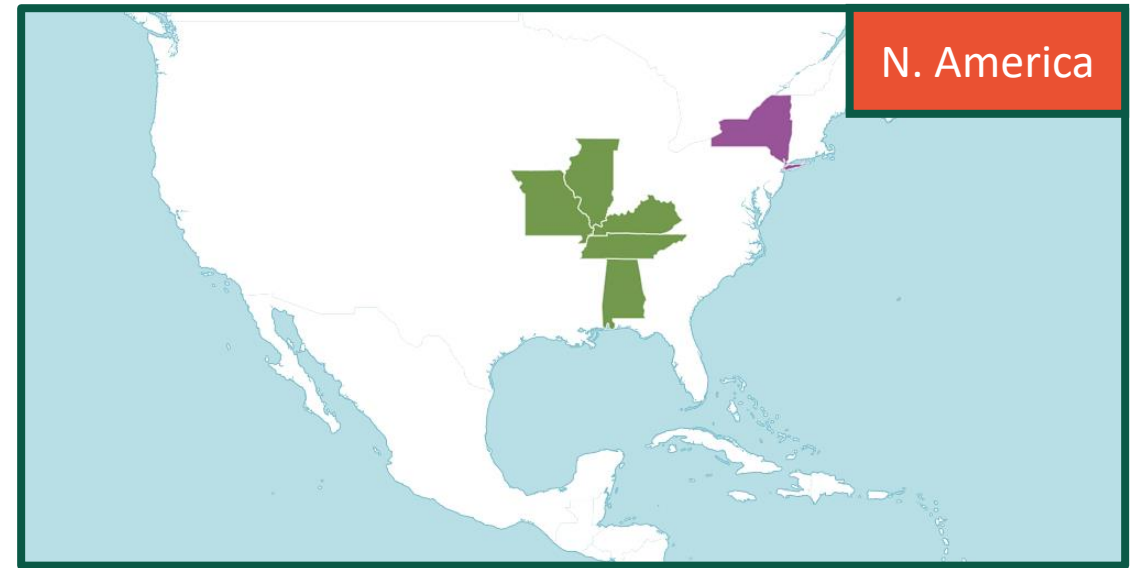


# *Phlox paniculata*

## Garden Phlox



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Shikmei Barger



'Alba Grandiflora'  
'White Admiral'



Midsummer  
- Early Autumn

Polemoniaceae  
Jacob's Ladder Family

3ft Perennial

# *Polygonatum multiflorum*

## Solomon's Seal




Photograph from Flickr (CC) Kerry Woods

P. multiflorum x P. odoratum

### Polygonatum x hybridum

The logo for the RHS Award of Garden Merit, featuring a green trophy cup inside a circular border with the text "RHS AWARD OF GARDEN MERIT" and a registered trademark symbol. To the right of the logo is a stylized white tree icon.

Spring 

Asparagaceae  
Asparagus Family

3ft Bulbous

# *Romneya coulteri*

## Californian Tree-Poppy



- Species -  
'White Cloud'



Summer ☀

Papaveraceae  
Poppy Family

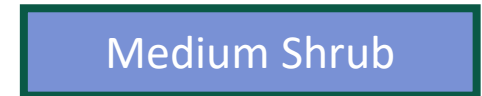
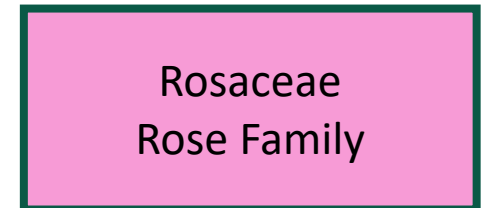
6ft Perennial

# *Rosa rugosa*

## Japanese Rose



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Orfano Mondo



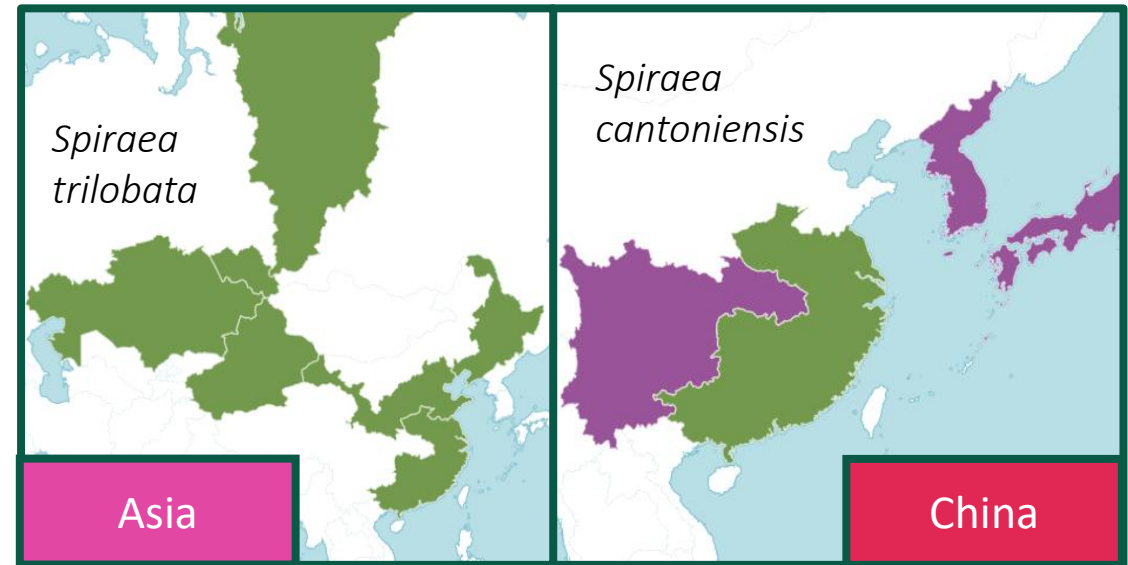
# *Spiraea x vanhouttei*

## Garden Bridalwort

*Spiraea trilobata* x *Spiraea cantoniensis*



Photograph from Flickr (CC) Stehmet Barger



‘Renaissance’ (Not AGM)

Related species: *Spiraea nipponica*

‘Snowmound’



Early Summer  
- Early Autumn

Rosaceae  
Rose Family

Medium Shrub

# *Tulipa gesneriana*

## Garden Tulip



'White Dream'  
'White Parrot'



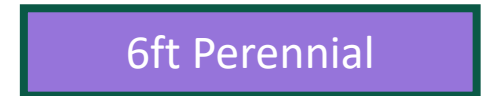
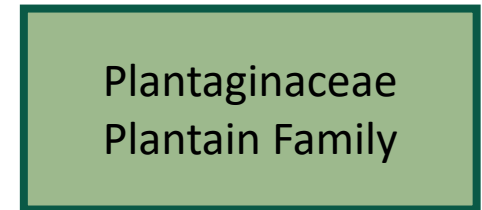
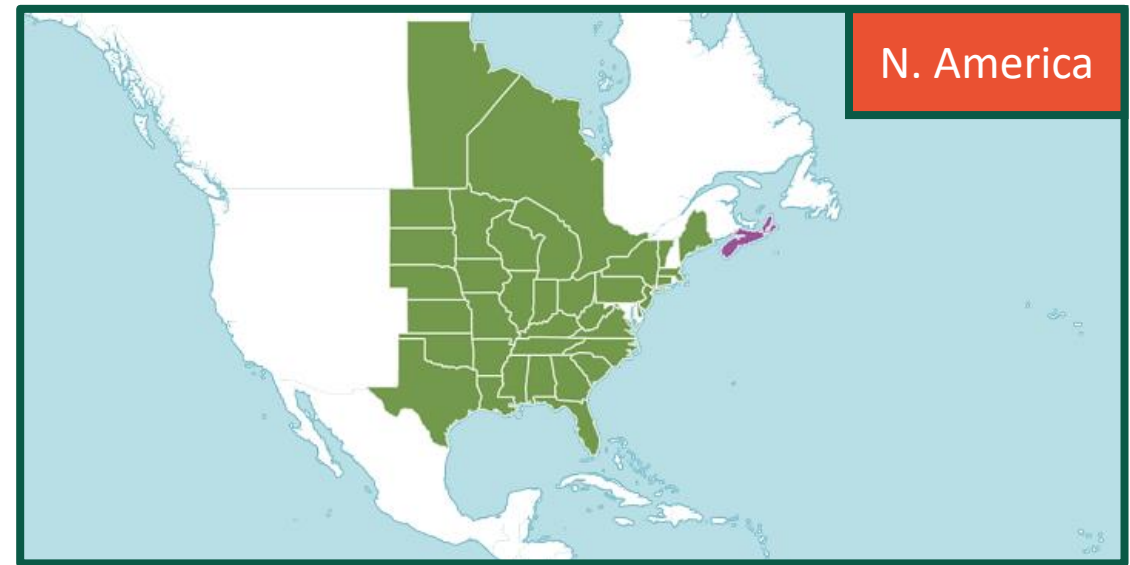
Spring 

Liliaceae  
Lily Family

2ft Bulbous

# *Veronicastrum virginicum*

## Culver's Root



# *Wisteria sinensis*

## Chinese Wisteria

