

**ONLA's July 2002
"Plant of the Month"**

**Monarda, Bergamot, Beebalm
Monarda didyma 'Petite Delight'**



Monarda didyma 'Petite Delight'

Monardas are mid-summer flowering perennials in the mint family with ovate opposite leaves with spicy aromas when crushed, square stems typical of plants in the mint family, and attractive whorls of tubular flowers in colors ranging from white to lavender to deep scarlet. Monardas are beloved by bees and hummingbirds. Plants typically grow to 3-4 feet in height, but the 'Petite Delight' cultivar is a dwarf, growing to 12-15", with lavender-rose flowers.

Plants in the genus *Monarda* are alternately called beebalm (as bees loves its floral aromas), bergamot, and Oswego tea (the early American plant explorer John Bartram called it that since settlers around Lake Oswego NY made it into a tea). The genus was named for a 16th century Spanish physician and botanist named Nicolas Monardes.

Monardas do well in full sun to partial shade and thrive when provided good moisture during hot summer periods. Deadheading helps with abundance of bloom and cutting back after a first bloom period can sometimes result in a second flowering in late summer. Dividing every three years is helpful. Leaves are used by some to make teas and in salads, and flowers are popular for potpourris.



Monarda didyma 'Petite Delight'

The main disease problem is powdery mildew which is lessened by planting in areas with good air movement and by choosing varieties with good mildew resistance, such as 'Petite Delight'. Monardas are native to the eastern U.S..

Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association Plant Selection Committee choice in 2000.



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