

BLUE SPIREA PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Blue spirea
- Scientific name: *Caryopteris divaricata*
- Perennial; native to Eastern Asia
- Drought tolerant deciduous shrub
- Grows to 3–4' in height with a 2–4' spread
- Silvery-gray foliage
- Dense clusters of bluish-lavender flowers
- Blooms appear in late summer through early fall and attract butterflies
- Hardy in zones 5–9

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Grows well in full sun or partial shade
- Requires well drained media; will tolerate dry conditions
- Over-fertilization will produce rampant growth but few flowers
- Mulch for protection in winter

PROPAGATION

- Easy to root from softwood cuttings
- Take cuttings between June and August
- Plants often self-sow

DISORDERS

- Spider mites
 - Feed on leaves, leaving them yellow and stippled
 - Make sure plants are regularly watered
 - Remove infested plants
- Leaf miners
 - Tunnel inside leaves to create a distinctive squiggly pattern
 - Pick and destroy infested leaves
- Powdery mildew (*Erysiphe cichoracearum*)
 - White coating on upper leaves
 - Leaves wilt, turn brown, and drop
 - Reduce humidity and remove infected plants

CONSUMER CARE

- Remove spent flowers to prolong the blooming period
- Cut plants back to about one foot tall in the spring to encourage bushy growth
- In zones 5 and 6, should be treated as an herbaceous perennial; above-ground growth should be cut back in winter
- Good choice for the back row of a bed of perennials

- Masses of 3–5 plants are particularly attractive

CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Caryopteris clandonensis*
 - ‘Dark Knight’: dark blue flowers
 - ‘Blue Mist’: powdery-blue flowers
 - ‘Worcester Gold’: mid-blue flowers, golden yellow leaves
- *Caryopteris divericata*
 - ‘Snow Fairy’: soft blue flowers; green leaves with white margins

References

http://landscaping.about.com/library/bl_blue-beard.htm

<http://www.gardening-tips-perennials.com/caryopteris.html>

<http://www.perennialnursery.com/plantinfo/caryopteris.html>

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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, University of Maryland, College Park, and local governments. Cheng-i Wei, Director of Maryland Cooperative Extension, University of Maryland.

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