

COLUMBINE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Columbine
- Scientific name: *Aquilegia vulgaris*
- Native to most temperate areas of the Northern hemisphere
- State flower of Colorado
- Herbaceous evergreen perennial with bushy, upright growth
- Grows to 1–3' in height
- Distinctive bell-shaped flowers bloom in May and June
- Depending on cultivar and species, flowers can be any color of the rainbow
- Hardy in zones 3–9
- Over 80 species in genus *Aquilegia*

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Easily grown; plants adapt to a wide variety of conditions
- Prefers partial shade, but will grow in full sun if provided with enough water
- Prefers moist, rich, well-drained media
- Provide with a soluble 5-10-5 fertilizer monthly
- In colder climates mulch for protection during winter
- Formation of seeds reduces the lifetime of the plant; remove spent

flowers promptly

- Replace plants every 3–4 years

PROPAGATION

- Seeds can be sown directly in the garden from early spring through mid summer
- Seeds germinate faster in light and should not be covered
- If seeding indoors, sow into flats, then refrigerate for 1–3 weeks before moving to 70–75° F
- Plants started from seed will produce blooms the second year
- To maintain a certain cultivar, purchase established plants, avoiding cross pollination
- Will self-seed easily; foliage can be pruned in the fall to prevent self-seeding

DISORDERS

- Powdery mildew (*Erysiphe polygoni*)
 - White fuzzy coating on upper leaves
 - Foliage will wilt, brown, and drop
 - Reduce humidity and remove infected foliage
- Crown rot (*Sclerotium rolfsii*)
 - Crown and stems rot, plant wilts, and

stems and leaves dry out

- Remove infected plants
- Root rot (*Pythium spp.*)
 - Leaves turn yellow
 - Provide good soil aeration and drainage
 - Remove infected plants
- Leaf miners
 - Cause marks in foliage
 - Remove infected leaves

CONSUMER CARE

- Foliage turns maroon in fall and remains attractive throughout the winter
- Used in cut flower arrangements as blooms are long lasting in water
- A favorite flower of hummingbirds
- Good addition to a rock garden

CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Aquilegia vulgaris*
 - 'Black Barlow': purple-black spurless flowers
 - 'Clementine': spurless, upward facing flowers
 - 'William Guinness': purple and white flowers
- *Aquilegia x hybrida*
 - 'Biedermeier mix': mix of pastel

flowers

- 'McKana Giants': large brightly colored flowers
- *Aquilegia flabellate*
 - 'Cameo': dwarf columbine

References

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aquilegia>

<http://www.thegardenhelper.com/Aquilegia.htm>

<http://www.soonerplantfarm.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/specials.specDetail/recID/21/index.htm>

<http://plantclinic.cornell.edu/flower/columbine.htm>

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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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