

Purple Coneflower

Echinacea purpurea

(ek-in-AY-shee-a pur-PUR-ee-uh)

Left: A late June bloom

Below: American Lady (*Vanessa virginiensis*) on a coneflower

Photo by and grown by John Brandauer



Description: The purple coneflower is perhaps the best known, and most planted of the coneflowers, and with good reason, vigorous, but not aggressive and almost maintenance free.

Other Names: Eastern purple coneflower, Coneflower

Type: Forb/herb

Family: Asteraceae

Life Cycle: Perennial

Native Status: NJ native, Wisconsin east to New York, south to Florida, west to Texas, and back to Wisconsin

Light Requirements: Full sun, part sun

Soil Preference: Adaptable, but likes decent drainage, does fine here in our heavy, gravelly clay.

Care: Easy, slugs are probably your only potential problem.

Growth Rate: Moderate; divide clumps after three to five years

Blooms: Color ranges, pink, magenta, violet, lavender..., drooping petals, in from early summer to fall.

Size: Two to five feet tall, about a foot, to foot and a half feet wide wide. Never that tall for us, about three feet tall.

Natural habitat: Savannahs, low areas, open woods, prairies, and roadsides.

Wildlife Benefits: A nectar source for hummingbirds, bees and butterflies. Goldfinches (NJ state bird) readily eat the seed.

Propagation Methods: Clump division, root cuttings, basal cuttings or seed. Stratification may increase germination. Self sows.

Commercial availability: Readily available, as native plants, seeds and cultivars. Some cultivars may lack the vigor of the native plant. Avoid doubles, they have little place in a butterfly garden.

Information compiled from the web, supplemented by our experiences.

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