

Plectranthus ecklonii, Cockspur

Plectranthus is a genus of about 350 species inhabiting warm tropical and subtropical climates principally in the southern hemisphere. Its range extends from sub-Saharan Africa through Madagascar, India and the Indonesian archipelago down to **Australia** and some Pacific islands.

Among the South African members of the genus are some of the showiest garden plants providing a mass display of colour. Colour selections range between pink, purple and white with many shades in-between.

Plectranthus are noted for their aromatic leaves when crushed or even brushed against. Flowers produce large amounts of nectar, attracting many insects which transfer pollen between flowers.

Plectranthus argentatus is one of the few silver leafed plant that will grow in shade.

GROWING PLECTRANTHUS

Plectranthus are easily cultivated and require little extra attention or special treatment. They thrive in semi shade or cool positions. They are ideally suited to growth under the shade of trees. They are generally shallow rooted and enjoy adequate water but they do store water in their stems and are resistant to prolonged periods of drought.

Plectranthus are often grown for their attractive foliage, flowers or both, and vary in their growth forms from dense prostrate ground covers to sub-shrubs and large shrubs.

Most of the shrubby species make better, more dense and attractive shrubs if they are pruned back to between 1/3 and 1/4 of their height, at the end of winter before the new growth begins for summer.

The ground cover species often have very attractive foliage and form dense attractive carpets from 150mm to 450mm thick, which burst into flower in autumn. They root readily at the nodes wherever they touch the ground, and will form dense mats in a relatively short time.

Shrubby species vary in height from 50cm to 2m and may be planted *en-masse* or as single individuals. Once again most species enjoy shade but there are a few which can endure full sun.

PROPAGATION

Plectranthus are exceptionally easy to propagate and can be produced very easily with little special treatment. Most propagation is done from cuttings during the early part of summer and spring. Cuttings may take the form of soft-wood or semi-hardwood, but tip cuttings are usually the best.



Family: Lamiaceae
Genus: *Plectranthus*
Species:
Plectranthus ecklonii
Common names:
 Cockspur,
 Blue Spur
 (Aust:
 Spur flower)
Origin:
 South Africa
 (40 species identified
 in Aust.)
Location in GBG:
 20th century Garden to
 right of entrance.
 Bed behind
 Sierra Redwood.
 Under Bunyas seen
 well from
 Walnut lawn.

Time of flowering:
 March, April, May – purple/blue
Available in Friends nursery



Plectranthus ecklonii is a showy shrub
 with a mass display of colour.

Geelong Botanic Gardens Map



Plectranthus ecklonii Cockspur, Blue Spur (Aust: Spur flower)



This information was developed
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