



**Stainless Steel Monkshood***Aconitum x cammarum 'Stainless Steel'*

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight:  

Hardiness Zone: 2a

Other Names: Wolfsbane

Description:

This showy perennial is popular for its remarkable metallic-blue spikes of flowers and attractive glossy green leaves; prefers to be planted in part-shade locations.

Ornamental Features

Stainless Steel Monkshood features bold spikes of silvery blue hooded flowers with creamy white overtones rising above the foliage from mid to late summer. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its attractive deeply cut ferny leaves remain dark green in colour throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Stainless Steel Monkshood is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting bees, butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Stainless Steel Monkshood is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Vertical Accent
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Stainless Steel Monkshood flowers
Photo courtesy of V. Trattar

Planting & Growing

Stainless Steel Monkshood will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. It tends to be leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and should be underplanted with lower-growing perennials. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. You may want to keep it away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone over the growing season to conserve soil moisture. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Stainless Steel Monkshood is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.