Garden Tree Mallow

Lavatera thuringiaca



Garden Tree Mallow flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 8 feet

Spread: 8 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Tree Lavatera

Description:

A large, woody upright bush with gray-green foliage, featuring masses of hollyhock-like, lavender-pink flowers from early summer until fall; does not tolerate cold, drying winds; cut back to six inches every spring in colder climates

Ornamental Features

Garden Tree Mallow features showy pink flowers with lavender overtones along the branches from early summer to mid fall. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its tomentose lobed leaves remain grayish green in colour throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

Garden Tree Mallow is an open multi-stemmed evergreen perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other garden plants with finer foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spreading

Garden Tree Mallow is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Garden Tree Mallow will grow to be about 8 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 8 feet. It tends to be leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and should be underplanted with lower-growing perennials. Although it is technically a woody plant, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as a perennial in our climate if planted outdoors over the winter, usually regrowing from its base (crown) the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. This plant will benefit from an application of bonemeal and/or mycorrhizal fertilizer at the time of planting. It is not particular as to soil type or pH, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.

Garden Tree Mallow 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. Be aware that in our climate, this plant may be too tender to survive the winter if left outdoors in a container. Contact our experts for more information on how to protect it over the winter months.