

North Carolina Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox

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Geranium sanguineum

Common Name(s): Bloodred Geranium; Bloody Cranesbill Geranium; Bloody Geranium

Phonetic Spelling

jer-AY-nee-um san-gwin-EE-um

Description

Bloody cranesbill geranium is an herbaceous perennial in the Geraniaceae family and is native to Europe and temperate Asia. The genus name comes from the Greek word "géranos" and means beak, referring to the beaked fruits. The species name *sanguineum* is Latin and refers to the red color of the leaves in fall.

This plant is a mounding perennial with prostrate to ascending branched and hairy stems that grows 10-20 inches tall and 20-24 inches wide. The flowers are magenta pink with darker venation that bloom in late spring to early summer and may rebloom throughout summer. The delicate basal foliage is lobed and turns red after a frost. It is one of the most popular perennial geraniums for gardens and is widely available.

Bloody cranesbill prefers moist but well-drained soil in full sun but tolerates part shade and some drought once established. It is also tolerant of clay soil, heat, deer and rabbits. Use as a groundcover, in a border, a rock garden or a pollinator garden. Bees and butterflies will visit the blooms. Divide the plant as needed in spring or fall to keep it in its desired space. It may also self-seed if conditions are right.

Insects, Diseases, and Other Plant Problems: No serious insect or disease problems but there is some susceptibility to leaf spots and rust. Also sawflies, vine weevil and capsid bugs.

Sun and Shade Demonstration Garden, Buncombe County



Form
Apollonio Tottoli
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Close up of flowers
Photo by Bob Gutowski
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Attributes:

Genus:

Geranium

Species:

sanguineum

Family:

Geraniaceae

Life Cycle:

Perennial

Recommended Propagation Strategy:

Division

Seed

Stem Cutting

Country Or Region Of Origin:

Europe to Caucasus

Wildlife Value:

Nectar from flowers attract butterflies and bees. Members of the genus Geranium support the following specialized bee: Andrena (Ptilandrena) distans.

Play Value:

Attracts Pollinators

Dimensions:

Height: 0 ft. 10 in. - 1 ft. 8 in.

Width: 1 ft. 0 in. - 2 ft. 0 in.

Whole Plant Traits:

Plant Type:

Ground Cover

Perennial

Woody Plant Leaf Characteristics:

Deciduous

Growth Rate:

Medium

Maintenance:

Low

Texture:

Medium

Cultural Conditions:

Light:

Full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day)

Partial Shade (Direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours)

Soil Texture:

Clay

High Organic Matter

Loam (Silt)

Soil pH:

Neutral (6.0-8.0)

Soil Drainage:

Good Drainage

Moist

Available Space To Plant:

12 inches-3 feet

NC Region:

Coastal

Mountains

Piedmont

USDA Plant Hardiness Zone:

3a, 3b, 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6b, 7a, 7b, 8a, 8b, 9a, 9b

Fruit:

Display/Harvest Time:

Summer

Fruit Type:

Capsule

Schizocarp

Fruit Length:

< 1 inch

Fruit Width:

< 1 inch

Fruit Description:

The long, slender beaked fruit

Flowers:

Flower Color:

Pink

Purple/Lavender

Flower Inflorescence:

Solitary

Flower Value To Gardener:

Showy

Flower Bloom Time:

Spring

Summer

Flower Shape:

Cup

Flower Petals:

4-5 petals/rays

Flower Size:

1-3 inches

Flower Description:

Magenta 5-petaled, cup-shaped flowers with darker veins are up to 1.5 inches wide. Blooms May-June and may rebloom during the summer.

Leaves:

Woody Plant Leaf Characteristics:

Deciduous

Leaf Color:

Green

Leaf Value To Gardener:

Showy

Deciduous Leaf Fall Color:

Red/Burgundy

Leaf Type:

Simple

Leaf Shape:

Palmatifid

Leaf Margin:

Lobed

Hairs Present:

Yes

Leaf Length:

1-3 inches

Leaf Width:

1-3 inches

Leaf Description:

Small green 5-lobed leaves are basal with smaller more deeply cut leaves up the stem. Leaves have hairs

Stem:

Stem Color:

Green

Stem Is Aromatic:

No

Stem Surface:

Hairy (pubescent)

Stem Description:

Ascending to prostrate hairy stems

Landscape:

Landscape Location:

Naturalized Area

Pool/Hardscape

Small Space

Walkways

Landscape Theme:

Butterfly Garden

Cottage Garden

Pollinator Garden

Rock Garden

Design Feature:

Border

Attracts:

Butterflies

Pollinators

Specialized Bees

Resistance To Challenges:

Deer

Rabbits