

Allium 'Millenium'

(Allium hybrid)

Perennial Plant of the Year: 2018

1'-1.5' compact upright clump, produced from bulblets held in a thick rhizome.

"Allium" is the Latin name of the onion family, encompassing not only culinary onions and garlic, but many highly ornamental species as well. 'Millenium', a cross of Siberian and European forms of Allium, was bred by Mark McDonough, a Massachusetts horticulture researcher.

A profusion of 2" bright rosy-purple spherically-round flower heads, on strong stems just above the foliage, July into August.

Beginning in spring, 6-12" attractive thick upright strappy glossy deep green grass-like leaves. When crushed, leaves emit a slight smell of onion.

Prefers sun, but will take a bit of shade. Average, dry to medium soils. Sand to clay soils, if well-drained. Drought tolerant, once established.

Easily grown.

The fleshy rhizomes with bulblets can be easily lifted and divided after several years, in fall or spring. Looks best when planted near bushy low-growing late-blooming perennials, like Geraniums, Asters, shorter Goldenrods like 'Little Lemon', and Downy Skullcap (*Scutellaria incana*), since Allium leaves begin to wither over the time the flowers bloom. The companions camouflage this as they themselves expand.

This cultivar of Allium produces sterile seed, so does not self-seed in the garden.

Excellent at the front of borders, as edging, in rock gardens. Good in masses and groupings, as accent specimens, and for late bloom. Also useful for containers, and for long-lasting cut flowers. As dried flowers, they retain a bluish of summer color. Flowers can add an oniony taste to salads.

Though Allium 'Millenium' is not native, its late season nectar still attracts honeybees and butterflies. At the same time, its aromatic foliage makes it deer and rabbit resistant. In fact, if you divide the plant, you can place divisions where they might act as deterrents.

Photos 1-3, 5: Walter Gardens, Inc.

waltersgardens.com/variety.php?ID=ALLMI

Photo 4: Missouri Botanic Garden PlantFinder

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