



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## ***Phlox drummondii***<sup>1</sup>

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### **Introduction**

A native of Texas, this popular wildflower has been cultivated and bred to produce a multitude of colors and forms, with plants ranging in size from 6- to 18 inches high (Fig. 1). The small, single flowers appear in a multitude of shades of red, lavender, and white, sometimes bi-colored, and are abundantly produced in clustered heads which are held high above the foliage. Some cultivars have small, star-shaped flowers, often edged in white with a contrasting eye. A large planting of Phlox is a spectacular sight when mass-planted as a ground cover in open, sunny areas but plants can also be successfully used in containers or as an edging. Phlox is ideal for naturalizing and the sweetly scented blossoms make nice cut-flowers.

### **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Phlox drummondii*

**Pronunciation:** flocks drum-MAWN-dee-eye

**Common name(s):** Annual Phlox

**Family:** *Polemoniaceae*

**Plant type:** herbaceous; annual

**USDA hardiness zones:** all zones (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** May

**Planting month for zone 8:** Apr

**Planting month for zone 9:** Feb; Mar

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** Feb; Mar

**Origin:** native to North America

**Uses:** edging; naturalizing; attracts butterflies; border

**Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

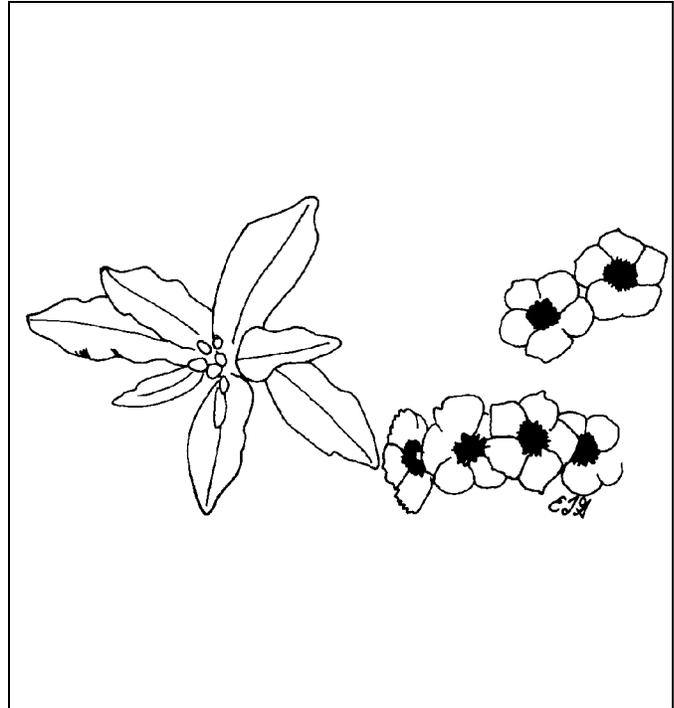


Figure 1. Annual Phlox.

### **Description**

**Height:** .5 to 1.5 feet

**Spread:** .5 to 1.5 feet

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** fine

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Foliage**

- Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite
- Leaf type:** simple
- Leaf margin:** entire
- Leaf shape:** oblong
- Leaf venation:** pinnate
- Leaf type and persistence:** not applicable
- Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches
- Leaf color:** green
- Fall color:** not applicable
- Fall characteristic:** not applicable

**Flower**

- Flower color:** lavender; red; white; bi-colored
- Flower characteristic:** showy

**Fruit**

- Fruit shape:** no fruit
- Fruit length:** no fruit
- Fruit cover:** no fruit
- Fruit color:** not applicable

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

- Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable
- Current year stem/twig color:** green
- Current year stem/twig thickness:** medium

**Culture**

- Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun
- Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; acidic; loam
- Drought tolerance:** high
- Soil salt tolerances:** unknown
- Plant spacing:** 6 to 12 inches

**Other**

- Roots:** not applicable
- Winter interest:** not applicable
- Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding
- Invasive potential:** may self-seed each year

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## **Use and Management**

Phlox will faithfully bloom from early summer until frost, especially if faded flowers are removed. Although flowering will decline during the hottest months of the summer, plants will flower again once the weather cools. Phlox should be planted in full sun on well-drained, rich soil and given plenty of moisture for best growth.

There are number of cultivars developed for flower color, density and timing.

Propagation is by seed, which will quickly germinate within ten days. Plants will often self-seed, providing many volunteers the following year. Phlox should be planted during spring in cold climates and in the fall where winters are mild.

No pests are of major concern.

### **Pests and Diseases**

No diseases are of major concern but care should be taken to keep the foliage as dry as possible, especially overnight, to avoid problems with powdery mildew and crown rot.