Lavandula angustifolia

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Introduction

Lavender produces gray foliage and purple flowers, although cultivars with pink, blue, lavender or white flowers also exist. Most plants are 2 to 3 feet tall but some cultivars are shorter and more compact. Soft leaves are borne on erect, square, tomentose stems. The plant is a perennial in the northern part of its range but may decline in zone 8 due to the summer heat.

General Information

Scientific name: Lavandula angustifolia
Pronunciation: luh-VAN-dyoo-uh-an-gus-tif-FOLE-ee-uh
Common name(s): Lavender, English Lavender
Family: Labiatae
Plant type: herbaceous; perennial
USDA hardiness zones: 5B through 8 (Fig. 1)
Planting month for zone 7: year round
Planting month for zone 8: year round
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: cut flowers; ground cover; mass planting; attracts butterflies
Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

Description

Height: 1 to 3 feet
Spread: 2 to 3 feet
Plant habit: spreading
Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: slow
Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: whorled
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: oblong
Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches
Leaf color: blue or blue-green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: purple
Flower characteristic: pleasant fragrance; summer flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: unknown
Fruit length: unknown
Fruit cover: unknown
Fruit color: unknown
Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable
Current year stem/twig color: gray/silver
Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun  
**Soil tolerances:** acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay  
**Drought tolerance:**  
**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown  
**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

**Other**

**Roots:** not applicable  
**Winter interest:** no special winter interest  
**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more  
**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive  
**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

**Use and Management**

The plants grow best in a sunny location in a dry, somewhat infertile soil. Protect the crowns with several inches of mulch during the winter. Plants are more susceptible to winter injury when grown in wet, heavy soil.

Lavenders are widely grown as ornamentals; they are tidy, low-maintenance plants that serve well as borders, knots, in rock gardens, and with roses. They are very sensitive to pH, which should be kept above 6. They can be pruned in early spring.

The oil of lavender is a mainstay in perfumery, and the fragrance is widely used in soaps and cosmetics. Flowers for drying must be harvested before opening. They can then be bound together into aromatic and decorative wands, or incorporated in potpourris or sachets.

Four-lined plant bug causes round, sunken, brown spots on the leaves. The injury is often mistaken for a disease.

**Pests and Diseases**

Leaf spot infected leaves can be picked off.