

Dodecatheon maedia L.
Shooting Star

Dodecatheon maedia is probably the most unusual plant that will be considered in this series. The basal rosette of leaves gives rise to a single flower stem about twelve inches high in the spring with an umbel of nodding flowers in white, lavender or pink. The petals are swept back completely and the anthers are pressed together in a forward pointing cone with the overall effect of a comet-like structure.

Shooting star is an ephemeral plant whose foliage dies back causing it to enter dormancy by mid-summer. Therefore it should be planted along with other perennials that will fill in the gaps lit leaves when it goes dormant.

Its native habitat is the woodlands so it will perform best in partial to full shade in humus-rich, constantly moist soil.



Shooting star is not very easy to find but worth the search for a gardener who wants something unique.

If the cultural requirements are not strictly met or if soil compaction occurs this plant will die out in a few years.