

# TATARIAN DAISY

*Aster tataricus*



## Characteristics

- Type: Perennial
- Zone: 3 to 9
- Height: 3.00 to 8.00 feet
- Spread: 2.00 to 3.00 feet
- Bloom Time: September to first frost
- Bloom Description: Violet-blue with yellow center
- Flower: Showy
- Sun: Full sun
- Water: Medium
- Maintenance: Medium
- Attracts: Butterflies, Bees

## Culture

Most folks consider summer the most colorful season in the garden, but autumn isn't shy either about putting on a show. That's not just with fall foliage but with bloom colors that seem to grow more intense the shorter the days grow and the softer the sunlight gets. A case in point: Asters, that old-fashioned perennial that often plays second fiddle to the ever-popular chrysanthemum. Tatarian aster, should become a part of everyone's fall garden. *Aster tataricus* is a tall upright perennial that, ironically, never requires staking. In spring, the plant emerges with large coarse leaves and stems, which by September produce elongated clusters of 1-inch wide lavender florets with yellow centers. One of the latest-blooming asters, it continues to flower into November or until the first frost, serving as a magnet for butterflies for weeks on end. Easily grown in average, medium, well-drained soils in full sun.

## Noteworthy characteristics

Provide full sun and well-drained soil. Hardy to Zone 3, this plant thrives in heat and humidity and adapts readily to soil extremes from wet clay to dry sand (it may spread a little too rapidly in light soil, however). This species needs plenty of room to grow. The 1-inch-wide, light lavender flowers are a magnet for local and migrating monarch butterflies. Divide every 3-4 years if needed to control growth. Plants can spread aggressively by rhizomes in optimum growing conditions. Distinctive paddle-shaped, lower leaves are up to 24" long and 6" wide, but leaves are significantly smaller in size higher up on the plant. Small but abundant flowers (to 1" across) with deep lavender to blue rays and yellow centers appear in flat-topped clusters in autumn. A late blooming aster that still looks fresh at time of first frost. Genus name comes from the Latin word *aster* meaning star for the shape of the flowers.

## Problems

No serious insect or disease problems. Staking may be necessary if grown in moist, fertile soils.

## Garden Uses

A tall aster for the back of the border or for naturalizing in a wildflower area. Great for cut flowers.