

VALE'S GREENHOUSE



Quality Plants For The Chinook Zone

301 – 3rd St. N.W., Black Diamond, Alberta

933-4814

PERENNIAL PLANT OF THE YEAR 2002

PHLOX PANICULATA “David”



Each year the Perennial Plant Association sends each member a ballot to select a Perennial Plant of the Year. These plants do not tend to be new introductions to the garden world, but plants that have been tried and thus proven worthy for nomination. After the selection, the plant is then promoted all across Canada and continental U.S.A. Here, in the Black Diamond and Calgary area, there have been years that the plant chosen has not been hardy to our Agricultural Zone of 2 or 3.

Phlox “David” is an offspring of a native phlox rescued and preserved in the 1980 by volunteers at the Brandywine Conservancy, near Philadelphia. On an August day in 1987, Richard Simon of Bluemount Nurseries, Maryland and Mrs. F.M. Mooberry inspected this fragrant, 36-40 inch tall white phlox and suggested that it should be introduced to the gardening world, because of its clean foliage with little trace of powdery mildew.

Mrs Moonberry selected the name David after her husband David Moonberry. The phlox was then tested at the Research Department’s of the Universities of Vermont and Cornell and it was determined the indeed Phlox “David” was a superior plant in many aspects. It has also been thought that the great naturalist and plant explorer John Bartram may have sent this same phlox to England in the early 1700’s.

An old-fashioned favourite this phlox has glossy leaves that are thin with bristly hairs on the margins. The fragrant white flower panicles are 6 to 9 inches long and 6 to 8 inches wide with 1-inch diameter florets. Phlox “David” is best grown in the full sun and is known for its long bloom period from July to first frost. Deadheading plants will prolong the bloom time and help the plant flourish into the fall. Phlox “David” performs well in Zone 2 of Southern Alberta and can be used in the formal garden or can be used in the informal garden such as the “cottage garden”.

Root cuttings, stem cuttings or division can propagate Phlox “David”. Clump division simply requires the separation of crowns within a clump. Division is done in spring with three to five crowns, which are sufficient size for division. Plants should be divided every two to three years to maintain vigour.

Although this phlox is resistant to powdery mildew, proper culture will aid in mildew prevention. Thin out stems to increase air circulation and water at the base on the plant and not the foliage.

For more information on the Perennial Plant Association, and past Selections for the Perennial Plant of the Year, check their web site at www.perennialplant.org.