



# Garden Clippings



Niagara College Greenhouse Centre Success Sheet No. 103

## Campanula

Campanulas, also known as Canterbury bells, bells of Scotland and Carpathian bellflowers, are grown around the world. They have been around for hundreds of years. More than 300 species are found throughout the northern hemisphere.

Campanulas come in many forms, including low-spreading, mounding and trailing. The plants can grow to 25 cm (10") in height and spread up to 60 cm (24"). The tall-growing upright forms can reach up to 90 cm (3') and spread just as wide.

### Description

The leaves are light to dark green and from rounded to heart shaped with wavy edges. Numerous long, wiry stems bear flower buds right to the tips.

Flowers appear in May and last throughout June and July. They can be doubles or singles, rosette or bell shaped in various shades of white, blue, dark purple and pink.

### Light

Campanula grow well in full sun or partial shade. If grown in too much shade, the plants will become drawn and leggy, eventually dying out.

### Soil

Campanulas prefer a cool, moist, well-drained soil rich in organic matter. They are very sensitive to overwatering. If the soil is too wet, the plants become susceptible to diseases.

### Diseases and Pests

Botrytis is a major problem. This fungus, which thrives in damp conditions and attacks

the stems and buds, causes them to rot, turn fuzzy brown and die. The spores can spread to other plants within the garden.

The best control is to remove the infected plant. Spider mites, aphids, fungus gnats, weevils and garden slugs pose only minor problems to the campanula. The insects can be controlled with an insecticidal soap and the slugs with slug traps.

### Uses

Campanulas can be used in many areas of the garden. The low-growing species make ideal plants for a rock garden, ground cover and borders. Trailing species are useful in hanging baskets or simply to create a cascade over the corner of a flower box. The taller upright kinds fit well in the rear of flower beds and serve as a contrast from the lower bedding plants or can be used as a focal point in the landscape.

### Upkeep

Campanulas need to be dead headed to promote continuous blooming. Simply pull the dead blooms off with your fingers. An organic fertilizer should be applied to the flowerbed in early spring.

Pruning back one third also encourages new growth. The taller varieties should be cut back to a point just above the new growth and staked, especially if they're in the shade.

Dividing the plants every few years in the early spring or late summer to keep them healthy and happy is also important.

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