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Mountain Beebalm in the Landscape

Heidi Kratsch, Extension Ornamental Horticulture Specialist
Graham Hunter, Research Associate, Center for Water Efficient Landscaping

Monardella odoratissima

Mountain Beebalm

Description: This mound-forming perennial is typically seen in higher elevations in the interior West. The lavender or rose-purple flowers are attractive to insects, especially bees and butterflies. In the mint family, its stems are sturdy and erect, and it emits a fragrant aroma of mint when brushed. This plant is easy to establish and maintain in Intermountain West landscapes and is perfect for rock gardens.

Cultural Requirements:

- Native Habitat: Typically in higher elevation, rocky areas at 6,000 to 11,000 feet.
- Soil: Dry, rocky or sandy well drained
- Cold Tolerance: Zones 3 - 8
- Drought Tolerance: Medium; water one time per month in most Utah landscapes.
- Salt Tolerance: Unknown
- Sun/Shade Preference: Full sun to part shade
- Propagation: From seed, stem cuttings, or division
- Maintenance: Clip off spent flowers for appearance and repeated bloom; prune lightly in fall for a more compact appearance.
- Problems: No known cultural problems
**Landscape Value:**
- **Use in the Landscape** Borders, accents, rock gardens, ground cover
- **Foliage** Glossy, ovate leaves oppositely arranged on stems; vary in color from dark green to blue-green
- **Flowers** Showy, lavender or rose-purple inflorescence (cluster of flowers) arranged in a flower head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Apr</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sept</th>
<th>Oct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Color</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fruit (seedheads)</strong></td>
<td>Smooth, brown nutlets (4)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Form</strong></td>
<td>Mounded, sprawling</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Texture</strong></td>
<td>Fine</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ultimate Size</strong></td>
<td>1 foot tall x 2 feet wide</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rate of Growth</strong></td>
<td>Fast; blooms in the first year.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Plant Community</strong></td>
<td>Subalpine, montane, foothills</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Availability</strong></td>
<td>“Utah’s Choice” selection; (visit [<a href="http://www.utahschoice.org/natives/where">http://www.utahschoice.org/natives/where</a> to buy](<a href="http://www.utahschoice.org/natives/where">http://www.utahschoice.org/natives/where</a> to buy) for more information).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cultivars</strong></td>
<td>None of ornamental value</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Propagation:**

Cold-moist stratify seed for up to 90 days. Germinate in a soil-less, peat-based mix at a depth of ¼ inch. Fresh seed may not need cold-stratification to germinate. Plant can be propagated from stem cuttings. Divide plants every 3 to 5 years, as needed.

**Additional Photos:**

![Image 1](image1.jpg)  ![Image 2](image2.jpg)

Photo credits: Graham Hunter
References:


This fact sheet belongs to a series of fact sheets about Intermountain West native trees, shrubs, perennials, and grasses called “Native Plants in the Landscape.” Look for others in the series by visiting http://extension.usu.edu/htm/publications, then clicking on ‘Horticulture’ and ‘Native Plants’.

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