



**Velvet Centaurea**  
*Centaurea gymnocarpa*

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 7 feet

Sunlight: ☉ ●

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Dusty Miller, syn. *Centaurea cineraria*

**Description:**

Large, fluffy purple flowers appear on long white stems from late spring into summer, over striking, fine white foliage; bees and butterflies cannot resist these blooms; a great groundcover for hillsides, or neglected sites

**Ornamental Features**

Velvet Centaurea features delicate purple pincushion flowers with pink overtones and white centers at the ends of the stems from early to late summer. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its attractive tiny tomentose narrow leaves remain white in colour throughout the year.

**Landscape Attributes**

Velvet Centaurea is an herbaceous annual with a ground-hugging habit of growth. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding



*Velvet Centaurea flowers*  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



*Velvet Centaurea in bloom*  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Velvet Centaurea is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Container Planting

### Planting & Growing

Velvet Centaurea will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 7 feet. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. Although it's not a true annual, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.



*Velvet Centaurea*  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under typical garden conditions. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America.

Velvet Centaurea is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its spreading habit of growth, it is ideally suited for use as a 'spiller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the edges where it can spill gracefully over the pot. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.