

# Perennials in focus

## S N A P S H O T S

### **Campanula ‘Sarastro’ | Sarastro Bellflower**



#### **Flower description and bloom time**

Large, 2 ½ inches long, dark purple, bell-shaped flowers appear heavily in June for about two weeks, and then smaller flowers appear sporadically through August.

#### **Foliage interest – color / texture**

Small heart-shaped leaves are medium green and a medium texture, which stay healthy all year long.



#### **Habit and growth rate observations**

Sarastro is a cross between *Campanula punctata* and *Campanula trachelium* and is 18 to 20 inches tall with an equal spread. The growth rate is slow and by underground rhizomes.

#### **Site preference / soil and light**

The most successful plantings were in moist, well-drained soils with supplemental watering and a light mulch. These received morning sun and afternoon shade. Some plants sited in full sun died the first year.

#### **Successes and possible drawbacks – how to overcome them**

The positives reported for Sarastro were the showiness of the flower and stems that remained more up right than *Campanula ‘Kent Belle’*. Cutting the plant back after first bloom rarely resulted in a good second flush of growth.

#### **Notes from growers / retailers**

While easy to grow in pots, the plant does not have much eye appeal in containers, unless it is in bloom.

#### **Best combinations**

The dark purple flower color will combine nicely with soft pastel colors such as pink, lemon yellow, and white. Some suggestions included *Achillea* “Moonshine”, *Iris siberica* ‘Gull’s Wing’, *Geranium sanguineum* ‘Album’, and *Geranium* ‘Ankum’s Pride’.

#### **Parting “SHOT” – the overall evaluation results were Fair to Poor**

The Evaluation Team did not recommend this plant, as the overall rating was **Fair to Poor**. The showy flower display in June was rated good to excellent, but problems with vigor and hardiness brought the ratings down. In our study, only 65% survived the three years. It did stay more upright than *Campanula ‘Kent Belle’*, but still needed some support during its heavy bloom period.



Evaluated 2003-2006