

Baptisia 'Midnight Prairieblues'

Midnight Prairieblues False Indigo

Baptisia 'Midnight PrairieBlues' (Midnight Prairieblues False Indigo) is a 4-season interest plant. In early spring, purple-tinted stems burst from the cold ground and resemble asparagus-like wands. The three-lobed leaves soon unfurl and catch the spring sun in shades of blue-green as they sway in a cool breeze. Beginning in May, towering, 24-inch spires of deep blue-violet flowers float above the foliage; the plant reaches 4-5' tall in full bloom. These pea-like blooms provide an important nectar resource for early season queen and worker bumblebees, as well as early butterflies. The plant is strongly vase-shaped when young, then the foliage fills out to create a tidy, shrub-like form that holds until fall. After the flowers fade, large black pea pods develop, providing new structural interest and sound as wind rattles the dry seeds within. As a member of the pea family, this plant fixes nitrogen in the soil. This drought-tolerant perennial adapts to a range of soil types, but prefers well-drained mesic to dry soil. It performs best in full sun but will tolerate part shade. The deep taproots of this plant assist in drought tolerance and erosion control, but can make older plants difficult to transplant once established. The upright stems and their lack of lowermost foliage make 'Midnight' suitable for planting close to other plants in the landscape.

Botanical Name: Baptisia 'Midnight Prairieblues'

Common Name: Midnight Prairieblues False Indigo

Family: Fabaceae

Nativity: Great Lakes native

USDA Zone: 4 to 9

Light Type: Full sun to light shade

Soil Type: Sand, loam, clay

Soil Preferences: prefers well-drained, mesic to dry

Soil Moisture: Dry to medium

Typical height (ft): 4-5'

Typical width (ft): 3.5-4'

Foliage: Blue green

Bloom Time: May, June

Bloom: Blue, purple

Ecological features: Attracts mostly bumblebees, but other pollinators as well; some birds may eat the seeds; fixes nitrogen in soil; deep roots provide erosion control

Tolerance of: Drought, deer, heat, salt

Additional notes: Has deep taproot; long-lived plant that develops extensive root systems, and should not be disturbed once established; May need support in part shade locations.

Companion plants: Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), Rattlesnake Master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), Sweet Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*), Showy Goldenrod (*Solidago speciosa*), and Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*)

For more information see:

<https://www.monrovia.com/plant-catalog/plants/5281/midnight-prairieblues-false-indigo/>

http://www.chicagolandgrows.org/downloads/midnight_prairieblues.pdf

https://1x848d9mftq5g9wx3epiqa1d-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Baptisia_Report-web_version.pdf



10888.jpg

Flower spike



midnight-1-lg.jpg

Plant form



706b3a25e4ee4f9d60bdc7a7fd24f379.jpg

Combining with other plants



B.-Midnight-4.jpg

Persistent black seed head

Image choices for narrative:

10888.jpg -- Flower spike

midnight-1-lg.jpg -- Plant form