

Adventurous Plants

HOW TO GROW BIARUM

The Genus *Biarum*

Biarum is an interesting genus of around 21 species. All are tuberous, and due to their small size make perfect plants for collectors, or for those just wanting to grow something a little unusual. Our *Biarum* are always in high demand and usually only available in very small numbers seasonally. We list them for sale late summer. We have numerous other species in cultivation, and as offsets become available they will be listed.

Biarum originate from semi-arid or seasonally dry parts of southern Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. All are highly seasonal in their growth habit – starting in late summer / early autumn and growing through the winter months, coinciding with the availability of seasonal rains in habitat. By late spring or early summer plants enter dormancy again, disappearing under ground to escape the heat of summer.

Most species flower during the autumn, usually before the leaves appear, although as with most things in life, there are exceptions to this general rule.

For the UK grower, it is best to consider all species as frost tender. Some reports suggest that *Biarum tenuifolium* and *davisii* are hardy given the right location, but I have not tried any planted out, and wouldn't recommend it unless you are the experimental type and are prepared to lose plants if things don't work out. A frost free greenhouse or cold frame is ideal.

How to Grow *Biarum*

It would be fair to say that *Biarum* can be challenging plants to grow, with some species need a fair bit of cossetting. The following *Biarum* cultivation instructions are what has worked for me, although I will be the first to admit that I have much to learn about their cultivation. Much of the original advice was taken from 'A taxonomic revision of *Biarum*' by Peter C. Boyce (2008). This paper is well worth a read if you can find a copy of it.

Pots and Potting Mixtures

Biarum take to pot cultivation very well.

Clay / Terracotta pots are best as these 'breathe' and help to prevent moisture build up and the risk rot damaging the tubers.

Tubers can be planted several to a pot.

Continued on pg 2.



Biarum marmarisense

Adventurous Plants

HOW TO GROW ARISAEMA

Pots and Potting Mixtures (continued)

The potting mix needs to be very free draining. Use a rich soil based compost, with about 50% added grit or perlite. A good tip is to fill the pot to a couple of cm from the top, and finish off with grit. This helps stop water collecting around the base of the leaves.

Plant the tubers 3 – 4 cm deep. Water once, and then leave until the first growth starts to show.

Plants can be watered sparingly until either flowering has finished or leaf growth really starts to pick up speed.

Too much water early on can lead to root damage. Remember, sometimes it is best to be cruel – these are plants from semi-arid regions and it is easy to kill with kindness!

Decent ventilation in the greenhouse or cold frame will help to prevent fungal infections, and make sure you try to give the plants as much light as possible.

Once Biarum start to enter dormancy, ease right back on the watering. Aim to keep the pots only just damp at most.

Annual repotting is a good idea – not only does this allow compost and nutrients to be replenished, but it gives a chance to inspect the tubers and to remove any offsets.

Barium Species List

B. tenuifolium ssp. tenuifolium
B. tenuifolium ssp. arundanum
B. tenuifolium ssp. galianii
B. tenuifolium ssp. zelebori
B. tenuifolium ssp. abbreviatum
B. tenuifolium ssp. idomenaenum
B. rhopalospadix
B. aleppicum
B. angustatum
B. carduchorum
B. eximium
B. bovei
B. crispulum
B. dispar
B. olivieri
B. straussii
B. syriacum
B. carratracense
B. kotschyi
B. fraasianum
B. pyrami
B. mendax
B. auraniticum
B. ditschianum
B. davisii
B. marmarisense



We sell Plants, bulbs and seeds online. Check us out!



Contact Us.



Connect with us.