

How to Grow Dame's Rocket

Dame's rocket is a garden plant that was introduced from Europe in colonial times. Dame's Rocket is a delightful upright biennial. Dame's Rocket is an easy to grow biennial or short-lived perennial which naturalizes freely and in some areas is considered a noxious weed. It has clusters of white, pink or purple flowers that bloom from May to August. The flowers of Dame's Rocket have four petals. The shapes of the leaves are oblong, sharply toothed, and alternately arranged. Leaves decrease in size as they ascend the stem. The flowering stalks have a height of 2 to 3 ft.

The plant is part of the mustard family, which also includes radishes, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and, of course, mustard.

- Each plant can produce up to 20,000 seeds.
- This plant starts out as a basal plant (growing near to the ground) in its first year of growth, and then shoots up the next spring to produce flowering stems.

Growing conditions for Dame's Rocket

- Plant Dame's Rocket in full sunlight to partial shade.
- Standard watering should be provided.
- A well-drained soil condition is best suited for growth.
- Dame's Rocket thrives in loam, sandy conditions or clay.
- They cannot survive in standing water.
- Space plants 6 to 8 inches apart. Plant seeds 1/2 inch deep.
- Germination appears to be optimum in warmer temperatures and on the soil surface.

Care for Dame's Rocket

- To control weed growth, apply 2 to 3 inches of mulch around the base of the plants.
- Remove spent flower heads.
- Use an herbicide rotation, because Dame's Rocket appears to develop resistance quickly.
- Prune back faded blooms and dying foliage in the late fall after the first hard frost of the season.