

BAPTISIA AUSTRALIS

by Allison Kelly

Blue false indigo



Image source: <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/plant-finder/plant-details/kc/q280/passiflora-incarnata.aspx>

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| Latin name: <i>Baptisia australis</i> | Texture: Medium ⁴ |
| Common name: Blue false indigo | Growth rate: Medium ⁴ |
| Flowers: Blue to violet flowers bloom along 10-12" long, upright stalks ^{3,12} | Light: Full sun to part shade ^{4,12} |
| Fruit: Two to 2.5" black pods follow flowering period ^{3,12} | Moisture: Medium ^{3,10} |
| Height & Width: 3-4' x 4' ³ | Soil*: Tolerates clay, shallow, rocky soil; Acidic (pH<6.8) , Circumneutral (pH 6.8-7.2) ^{10,12} |
| Type: Herbaceous perennial ¹² | Zones: 3-8 ³ |
| Habit: Upright ¹² | Origin: Midwestern to Southeastern United States, including South Carolina ¹⁶ |
| Welland indicator category**: Not available ¹⁷ | |

Features:

Blue false indigo features striking blue and violet flowers along tall, upright stalks in late spring followed by interesting black seed pods³. *Baptisia australis* also serves as a host plant for many butterfly species^{4,12}.

Siting:

Baptisia australis grows best in moist, well-drained soil and in full sun conditions³.

Care:

Plant crown at soil level¹⁸. At planting,

water the roots and surrounding area slowly and deeply. Keep soil moist until plant is established, then apply enough water to thoroughly moisten the root zone when the soil is dry or during drought. Modify water recommendations to reflect site drainage and rainfall. Apply 3" of mulch over the planted area. Do not allow mulch to touch the plant stems¹⁸. Dead stems should be cut within 18" of the ground in late fall². Transplanting is difficult due to its deep taproot system^{3,4}.

Pests:

Plants are relatively pest resistant if cultural preferences are met.

This plant does not appear on the following invasive plant lists on (11/11/12):

~~X~~ USDA SC Invasive Plant Species Web site at <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/main.shtml>

~~X~~ SC Exotic Plant Pest Council Web site at <http://www.se-eppc.org/southcarolina/>

Sources listed on Clemson Sustainable Landscape Demonstration Garden at <http://www.clemson.edu/cafls/demo/index.html>.