

Lesser Known Bulbs That Need Some Love

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Fritillaria Meleagris is a perennial bulb that performs best when grown in dappled sunlight conditions. Its showy, dainty flowers are 2" long bell-shaped blossoms. The flowers are typically solitary but may be accompanied by one or more blooms. Beautiful petals of veined and checkered red-brown, purple, white and gray are situated atop slender stems. You may want to situate this plant near the front of your border or bed. Its small stature and dark coloring are difficult to appreciate from a distance.

We are probably all familiar with the large globe Alliums but there are a lot of other beautiful and lesser known varieties too. Alliums are members of the onion family. Cut a stem or crush a leaf and there will be no mistake. An allium flower head is a cluster of individual florets.



Allium amethystinum 'Red Mohican' Burgundy 1 to 2 inch umbels are frosted with white tips, each fragrant bloom made even more unique by the tuft of frosted, stick-like extrusions emerging from its 'head'. Stems grow in a bent pattern initially, like walking sticks, but straighten and stretch over time.



Allium moly 'Jeannine' A vigorous form of A. moly with 2 to 3 inch umbels of yellow star-like flowers, often 2 umbels per stem. Grown in southern Europe for centuries to bring good luck and prosperity. Plants do well in full sun to partial shade, but in climates where the summers are hotter, it should be planted in a location shaded from the strength of the afternoon sun. It grows best in sandy soils that are rich in organic matter.



Anemone blanda these little flowers delight and seem to flower for weeks. Compact 3 inch flowers and early spring blooming, this daisy-like flower grows well on grassy banks and under thinly planted trees. Also grows well in containers. Will multiply easily.

Corydalis solida is ideal for naturalizing in moist areas as it multiplies readily once established and rarely grows over 6 inches tall. The plants drape nicely over walls and crevices or the joints of steps.



Racemes of dainty, bright pink blooms appear in April above finely cut fern-like foliage. The 1 inch tubular flowers have a slightly pouted bottom petal, giving the flower a 2-lipped appearance.

Chionodoxa commonly known as glory of the snow, bloom in very early spring. These hardy, carefree



bulbs are excellent for naturalizing. Planted beneath trees or shrubs, or even right in the lawn, they will multiply readily and spread a ripple of early spring color through your landscape. Bright true blue flowers are stunning in the early spring garden. The star-like flowers can be sky blue, lavender, pink or white.

Plant chionodoxa where it will be easy to enjoy their cheery flowers. Plant the bulbs beside a pathway through your garden or along the way to your front door. Chionodoxa look best when the bulbs are planted in clusters as they would grow naturally. To plant several bulbs at once, dig out a 6" x 6" area, plant 5 to 7 bulbs and then replace the soil.



Dracunculus vulgaris A striking although bizarre plant growing up to 3 feet tall. The flower is a spathe up to 18 inches long and over 6 inches wide of deep, maroon purple from which protrudes a long, blackish-red spadix. Handsome lobed foliage, marbled and spotted with dark purple, fans out around the thick, blotched stem of the flower spike. The flower appears in early-to-mid summer, it has an unpleasant odor for the 1st day it's in flower as it is pollinated by flies.



Nectaroscordum siculum A very small genus closely related to Allium, and listed by some as Allium siculum bulgaricum. The robust habit of this plant and its pendulous, bell-like flowers make it very distinctive. Up to 30 flowers, greenish white accented with pinkish-purple markings, are borne in loose umbels atop long arching stalks which become erect in fruit. Dry the seed capsules for winter flower arrangements. Will reseed freely in the garden.

