

Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale



***Mertensia virginica* – Virginia bluebells**

COMMON NAME: Mertensia, Virginia bluebells

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Mertensia virginica* – This plant name is in honor of Franz K. Mertens (1764 – 1831), a German botanist.

FLOWER COLOR: The buds are pink and the newly opened flowers pinkish blue, becoming blue or lavender with age.

BLOOMING PERIOD: late April to May

SIZE: 1 to 2 feet

BEHAVIOR: Flowers are in clusters of nodding trumpet-shaped blossoms as the common name of Virginia bluebells would indicate.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Medium to wet woods with rich soil. Seems to tolerate black walnut trees and rabbits!

NATURAL RANGE: New York to Alabama, west to the Great Plains.

SPECIAL FEATURES: Adds color and delicacy to the woodland garden with the plant dying back by early summer. Hummingbirds are attracted to the blossoms.

SUGGESTED CARE: Easy to grow and spreads rapidly. Take care to keep it under control so that it doesn't crowd out other desired spring woodland plants. Transplant seedlings in early spring.

COMPANION PLANTS: Wild leek, spring beauty, toothwort, Dutchman's breeches, Jacob's ladder, trillium.