

August 2021

Purple Coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea* L.

From the composite family (Asteraceae)

The Purple coneflower is a perennial, herbaceous plant. It has broad lanceolate leaves, a strong upright stem and reaches a height of up to 120 cm. The striking flowers appear from July to October. The ligulate flowers have pink to purple petals. These first stand out horizontally from the flower base (receptacle) and grow up to 8 cm long. The base of the basket is highly arched and brown-red in colour. The genus name "Echinacea" is derived from the Greek "echinos" (the hedgehog) and refers to the conical flower base with the green, pink or purple tubular flowers and the stiff palea (chaff leaves) with spiky ends.

The Purple coneflower is a medicinal plant, the ingredients are mainly polysaccharides, alkylamides, caffeic acid derivatives and essential oil. It is originally native to North America. In Europe it is widely present as a neophyte.

In the garden this very decorative plant prefers loose, humus-rich soil. The location can be full sun, but it is important to provide a sufficient water supply in dry conditions. After flowering, the coneflower forms a beautiful seed head that can remain until winter.

