**Monarda fistulosa**  
**Wild Bergamot**

This showy mint family member boasts a fragrance similar to bergamot oranges. Its aromatic leaves are used in herbal tea. Flowers attract numerous pollinators, especially bees. Seedheads attract small birds. The Virginia Native Plant Society named Wild Bergamot** Wildflower of the Year in 1993.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perennial</th>
<th>Clump, Flowers with Pollinators,** Fruit***</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Height: 2–4 feet</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Spread: 2–3 feet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bloom color: Pink, lavender</td>
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</table>

**Characteristics**

Clump-forming, showy perennial with erect branches

Toothed, ovate, gray-green leaves with minty odor

Bilabiate (two-lipped), tubular flowers in rounded, solitary, terminal heads, which open from the center to the periphery, bloom from June to September

Spreads from creeping rhizomes and seeds

**Attributes**

Tolerates various soil types (including clay), some drought, and Black Walnut; no serious pests but powdery mildew and rust can be problems; deer seldom severely damage

Ethnobotanic, therapeutic, and herbal uses  
(flowers and aromatic leaves edible)

Attracts hummingbirds, butterflies, and bees; larval host for Orange Mint and Hermit Sphinx moths

**Growing and Maintenance Tips**

Soil requirements: Well-drained

Light requirements: Sun, Partial Shade

Water requirements: Dry, Moist

Deadhead to prolong blooms/prevent self-sowing; leave late seedheads for birds if self-sowing not a concern; divide every 2–3 years in early March

Grow in full sun in well aerated soil and prune for good air circulation to lessen powdery mildew

Use massed in perennial border, herb, meadow, native plant, or wild garden

Hardiness: USDA Zones 3–9

*It is native in DC, Maryland and in the Piedmont of Delaware. It is native in about two-thirds of the counties in PA. In VA, it is frequent in the Coastal Plain (it is absent in Prince William County). **M. fistulosa attracts pollinators like Bombus bimaculatus (two-spotted bumble bee) and monarch butterfly. Leaves (middle right) show signs of powdery mildew. ***Tubular calyxes from which petals have abscised mature from green to brown as brownish/blackish seeds (nutlets) form within.

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