

Lungwort

Pulmonaria saccharata



Bloom: March-April

Lungwort is usually planted for its distinctive foliage. These plants make a clump of foliage that spreads through the roots.

Plant History and Habits

Lungwort prefers moist but not soggy soil in part to full shade. The silver spots on the leaves are foliar air pockets which cool the lower surface of the leaves. The more spots on the leaves, the more sun they can withstand. In warmer climates, the leaves can be semi-evergreen. Flowers buds are pink, and new flowers are pink, but the blossoms turn blue as they mature. Insect pollinators are attracted to blues over pinks!



Folklore

The genus name *Pulmonaria* comes from the Latin word for lung. In the medieval period, herbalists followed a “Doctrine of Signatures,” by which they believed the appearance of a plant would provide clues to how the plant could be useful medically. Accordingly, lungwort was used for lung diseases because the spotted leaves resembled diseased lungs. The Doctrine of Signatures is no longer considered scientifically reliable, but in this case, *Pulmonaria* is still used to treat some chronic respiratory conditions.

Origins

Native to western Europe.

Look for it...

Lungwort abounds in the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society Native Azalea Garden and the Wood Wildflower Garden.

