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*Phlox paniculata*

[Synonyms : *Phlox decussata*]

**PHLOX** is a perennial. Native to eastern North America it has small fragrant, purple flowers. It is also known as Autumn phlox, Common phlox, Fall phlox, *Flox metlinatý* (Slovak), Garden phlox, *Höstflox* (Swedish), Perennial phlox, *Plamenka latnatá* (Czech), and Summer phlox; and in flower language is said to be a symbol of ‘trying to please you’, and unanimity.

*Paniculata* means ‘pyramidal flower clusters’.

This species is a parent of many of today’s colourful, cultivated varieties.

Phlox was introduced to Britain from North America in 1725. It was particularly popular with the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Victorians for whom it symbolized sweet dreams and an implied proposal of marriage. The flowers were often included in tussie-mussies and bouquets.

In more recent decades in North America, the admiration for the different species is so great that some American garden clubs have been urging that phlox be recognized as a national flower of the United States.

Medicinally, phlox is used today in folk practice. Extracts of the leaves provide both a laxative and a treatment for boils.

It is the birthday flower for 26<sup>th</sup> May.