

Common Name- Four O’Clocks

Scientific Name- *Mirabilis jalapa*

Family- Nyctaginaceae

Hardiness Zones/Habitat- Zones 1-11

Description:

Four O’Clocks are tender perennial flowers that are commonly found in gardens. A nickname for this flower is the *marvel of Peru*, because this plant is native to Peru. Because they were originally shipped back to Europe by the Spanish conquistadors, they are one of our oldest garden flowers. They grow from 18 to 30 inches tall. Because these flowers respond to temperature instead of an internal clock, they will open around four o’clock in the evening after the heat of the day. The flowers will close the following morning. This trumpet-shaped flower can tolerate a wide range of flowers and can be planted directly in the garden after the last frost. They come in a wide range of colors including white, yellow, purple and almost every shade of red. These flowers are fragrant and are enjoyed by hummingbirds and lunar moths, because of their abundance of nectar. The stems and roots cannot be consumed due to serious stomach upset, and some people can get dermatitis from handling the roots. These flowers are located on the West Lawn of Monticello.

Uses:

Medicinal- The root was used as a medicinal purpose in the form of a hallucinogen and as an alleged aphrodisiac.

General- The red flowers produced an edible red dye, which could be used for food coloring.



References

Four O’Clock. (2001, July 07). Retrieved August 1, 2019, from <https://www.monticello.org/site/house-and-gardens/in-bloom/four-oclock>

Klingaman, G. (1999, October 8). Plant of the Week: *Mirabilis jalapa*. Retrieved August 1, 2019, from <https://www.uaex.edu/yard-garden/resource-library/plant-week/four-oclock.aspx>

Mahr, S. (2018, June 15). Four O’Clocks, *Mirabilis jalapa*. Retrieved August 1, 2019, from <https://wimastergardener.org/article/four-oclocks-mirabilis-jalapa/>

Mirabilis jalapa. (n.d.). Retrieved August 1, 2019, from <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a595>