

your garden needs...



## ...*Ricinus communis*

Species: *Ricinus communis*

Family: Euphorbiaceae

Common name: Castor Oil Plant, Castor Bean

Height: 150cm (5 ft.)

Grow as: annual

Display period: June—September

*Ricinus communis* is a large plant used mainly for spot planting in display beds.

**Use** [packetseeds.com](http://packetseeds.com) *Ricinus communis* offered at 95 pence per packet.

*Ricinus communis* embraces many forms differing in height, colouring of the leaves and shape of the seed. The original form, probably a native of Africa or East India, is nowadays grown in all warmer regions. In the UK and Europe it can be grown only as an annual— it will not survive the winter.

Under favourable conditions the huge plants may grow to a height of 10 ft. The large leaves are palmate and differ in colour according to the variety. The flowers are borne in groups; it is the leaves, not the flowers (combined with the size of the plants) that are the ornamental feature.



*Ricinus* is planted out as a solitary subject or in groups in grass or in front of buildings. It is good as a backdrop for flowers, being generally used to mask walls and fences, but it is also used in large containers and earthenware urns, where it is very attractive even though it is not as large as when grown in the open ground.

**Growing:** *Ricinus* requires well draining soil a warm, sunny position. The young plants should be placed outdoors after all risk of frost is past. Fertiliser should be applied as needed and the plants watered liberally.

**Sowing:** The seeds should be sown under protection into trays or small pots from mid-March to April. They may be sown even earlier but then the plants must be potted on before being moved to their permanent positions. The seeds will germinate more quickly and more readily if soaked in tepid water for one day prior to sowing. Germination temperature 22°C.

