

## FLAX IN FIELDS AND GARDENS

### FLAX IN GARDENS (4th part)

'LINUM GRANDIFLORUM'

**Flax, a symbol of poetry, or romance with a sentimental connotation?** The blue of a flax flower, ranging from a nearly white light blue to a deep blue with violet reflections, on top of long flexible stems, is a manifestation of the plant's delicacy and its fragility, especially as this short-lived flower can't be picked. And yet, a tuft of pretty blue flowers in the garden will keep our green niches bright, flower after flower, every day for several weeks. Then come the pods, elegant capsules in place of the flowers that will hold until autumn and whose stems, which must be cut, as it is impossible to break the robust strands by hand, will serve as mulch or go to compost.



#### ANNUAL FLAX

The annual flax '*linum grandiflorum*', in vibrant colours of bright pink, red or salmon, will liven up a rocky corner, a flowery meadow with some poppies, daisies, *Nigella damascena* (Love-in-a-mist), cornflowers, cosmos ... sow rather late, in April or May.

#### TEXTILE FLAX

We also sow *linum usitatissimum* near the potatoes in our kitchen garden; they drive away Colorado beetles. But with or without beetles, and with or without potatoes, we plant blue flax in the kitchen garden at the end of winter, taking care to watch for slugs and snails.

#### PERENNIAL FLAX

Let's not forget perennial flax '*linum perenne spp*', which also has pretty blue flowers and a slightly bluish foliage, which you'll encounter every year with pleasure. If your soil is rather compact, do not hesitate to add sand. It will also thrive in your rocky corner in a light soil.

*To be continued*