



For the joy of gardening!

Estabrook's

PRAIRIE BEE BALM CARE

LIGHT

Wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*) and eastern bee balm (*M. bradburiana*) suit sunny, open plantings. Eastern bee balm also tolerates partial shade. These species accept drier conditions than typical scarlet garden bee balm, but both benefit from good air circulation and adequate light.

WATERING

Water regularly while plants establish, then check during extended dry spells. Established plants tolerate occasional drought, but severe water stress can increase mildew problems. Wild bergamot performs well with moderate moisture; eastern bee balm accepts medium to dry sites. Water at soil level without saturating the crown.

SOIL & PLANTING

Choose well-drained soil and plant at the original nursery depth. Eastern bee balm can grow in rocky ground; wild bergamot suits meadow and border conditions. Avoid stagnant, poorly drained sites. Allow the labeled mature spacing so leaves have room to dry and expanding clumps do not crowd neighbors.

FERTILIZING

These plants generally need modest fertility rather than a rich feeding program. Use a soil test if poor growth suggests a nutrient problem. Add fertilizer only as directed, and check light, moisture and crowding first. Excessive feeding is unnecessary in an established native-style planting.

FLOWERS & SPREAD

Eastern bee balm usually flowers earlier and stays shorter than wild bergamot. Remove spent flowers to tidy plants or limit self-seeding, or leave some seed heads for a naturalized planting. Divide expanding healthy clumps when needed and replant rooted sections promptly. Seedlings may differ from named cultivars.

SEASONAL CARE

Watch for mildew or rust, especially where foliage is crowded or plants are stressed. Remove diseased material, but retain some healthy hollow stems as insect habitat through winter. Clear smothering debris from new spring growth. Manage unwanted seedlings and spreading shoots along the edges of smaller beds.