

Purple foxglove

Digitalis purpurea

Description

Original source of the drug, digitalis. Highly toxic; fatal if eaten.

Habit

Biennial or short-lived perennial; herbaceous; ranges from 2-6 ft tall.

Leaves

Alternate, stem leaves lance-like, hairy below, progressively smaller up the stem.

Stems

Erect; ranges from 2-6 ft tall; grows from basal rosettes.

Flowers

Purple/white in color, 5-parted, 1 1/2-2 in long, upper lip not covering 4 stamens, lower lip only slightly longer and spotted with dark purple inside; tubular with bell-shaped opening, inflorescence a terminal cluster (raceme), stalked flowers often from only one side of the stem.





Fruits and Seeds

Seed pod, oval to round, splits open at maturity,
numerous 0.1-0.2 mm seeds.

Habitat

Native to Europe. Found along roadsides, disturbed areas, moist meadows, open woodlands and pastures.

Reproduction

By seed. Viable for at least 5 years.

Similar

Straw foxglove (*Digitalis lutea*) and species of Beardtongue (*Penstemon* spp.).

Monitoring and Rapid Response

Hand-pulling can be effective; herbicides more effective with large infestations.

Credits

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