



FORT TICONDEROGA

National Historic Landmark

Flower of the Week

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Common Name:	Hollyhock
Botanical Name:	Alcea Rosea
Family:	Malvaceae (Mallow)
Plant Type:	Herbaceous Biennial Flower
Season of Bloom:	Early to mid-summer

Hollyhock is a member of the hibiscus family, a few of its relatives being cotton and okra. It is an old fashioned biennial or short lived perennial often used in cottage gardens.

During the 19th century, this plant became popular in Victorian era gardens as new colors and the double flowered varieties were introduced from China. Hollyhock is a native of Asia. It was brought to England by Crusaders during the Middle Ages. The name hollyhock is derived from “hoc”, the English name for mallow (a closely related species) and “holy” alluding to its introduction from the Holyland.

Red is the most common color, but through careful breeding or natural hybridization, variations including pinks, purples, white, yellow and even black are now common.

Hollyhocks are very drought resistant and tolerate full sun. The 3 to 6 foot tall stem bears flowers along its length, each flower lasting three or four days. Sometimes a short-lived perennial, the plant readily reseeds itself. Long taproots make it difficult to transplant hollyhocks, so they are best suited for natural or informal gardens.

