

LEWISIA

Cultural Details: ZZ225

Conventional *Lewisia* is a compact, rosette-forming rockery perennial which is sold in flower during May and June. It is a cold germinator, whose seed requires stratification to germinate.

Variety Selection

Coyledon Sunset Strain contains a wide range of colours, and the recently-introduced 'Little Peach' has white petals with peachy-yellow centres.

Programming the Crop

Sow seed in Autumn or Spring, for flowering the following year.

Propagation and Growing-on

To break the dormancy of the seed, place it in a freezer for around 10 days prior to sowing. Then sow the seeds (1,000 per gram) onto the surface of a free-draining, open, seed sowing compost, which should be thoroughly wetted with a suitable fungicide prior to sowing (to prevent damping-off diseases), and the trays allowed to drain. Sow into plug trays to prevent root disturbance, or into seed trays. Cover the seeds with a layer of vermiculite, and cover trays with clear or milky polythene to maintain humidity, until the first seedlings are visible. Germinate in a cool place, maximum 15°C – germination should commence in about 3 weeks from sowing, although it is a little erratic. Alternatively, sow the seeds in the Autumn, and leave in a cold frame – germination should be naturally broken over the Winter, and germination start in the Spring.

When the seedlings are large enough, prick out into a low nutrient, free-draining compost, into large-celled plug trays, then later once these are fully developed, into 9cm pots. The addition of sharp sand or grit to the compost can help the drainage, especially important when overwintering. Plants kept wet for long periods will die, so water carefully and sparingly, especially during the Winter.

Sell non-flowering plants as soon as the rosette has reached sufficient size, otherwise sell during the natural flowering time in May and June.

Pest and Disease

Keep slugs away from the plants, and monitor for signs of aphids, spraying as appropriate.

Lewisia cotyledon 'Elise' (2013 introduction)



Unlike any current **Lewisia cotyledon** cultivars, Fleuroselect Gold Medal winner '**Elise**' flowers in the first season without a cold period and brings to the market an excitingly new, almost exotic annual for rockeries, beds and containers. '**Elise**' starts flowering 4-5 months after sowing and this sturdy plant with its attractive fleshy, succulent leaves will delight all season long in sumptuous shades of pastel pink, rose, salmon, orange, white and yellow, and bicolour patterns.

A Fleuroselect Gold Medal is awarded to real breakthroughs in ornamental breeding and a first-year flowering **Lewisia** needing no vernalisation thus offering a substantially shorter cultivation period fits the bill. During the Fleuroselect trials held at 15 locations across Europe, **Lewisia Cotyledon 'Elise'** flowered profusely in the first year, leaving the competition way behind. The Fleuroselect judges were further impressed with the improved germination and exceptional heat tolerance. '**Elise**' is a genuine breeding breakthrough and a well-deserved Fleuroselect Gold Medal winner.

IN DETAIL

The grower will enjoy the shorter crop time and can programme the variety into an annual schedule. '**Elise**' also demonstrates better and more reliable germination than any of the competitors, with a germination of up to 80%, enabling plug production. The retailer can offer a multi-season product fitting into spring, summer and autumn bedding programmes and the consumer will delight in the sumptuous pastel shades and bicolour patterns in patio containers, on balconies and in gardens from early spring right through to autumn. **Lewisia 'Elise'** thrives in a well-drained soil and is drought tolerant. It does well in terracotta pots and rockery arrangements and can also be used in vertical plantings, fitting perfectly into the current trend of vertical gardening.

Lewisia is named after Captain Lewis, who discovered the plants growing in the Rocky Mountain areas of California and Oregon. The variety is commonly known as Cliff Maids for its ability to grow vertically on a cliff face or Bitter Root for the bitter tasting pen-root, consumed by the native Indians. It is a **perennial** from the **Portulaca** family, traditionally used in rockeries and is heat and drought tolerant, but can also thrive in lower temperatures. The key to **Lewisia's** happiness is good drainage. '**Elise**' is a new variety in which the wonders of the wild are combined with modern breeding techniques to produce a first-year flowering, all-season seller which will bring music to the ears of garden lovers everywhere.

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Novelty	: Flowers without a cold period. Total flowering during spring, summer and autumn. Lewisia cotyledon can now be grown as an annual.
Characteristics	
Colour	: Rich mixture in shades of pink, rose, salmon, orange, white, yellow and striking bicolours.
Flower	: Single, multiflora
Flowering Period	: Early spring to autumn
Type	: Annual, O.P., diploid
Use	: Pots on patio and balcony, bedding plant in rockeries
Plant	: Height 12-16 cm, spread 15-20 cm
Seed	: Approx. 1000 - 1200 seeds per gram
Growing	: Sow seeds at 20-22°C (do not pre-chill) begin January for small pots or mid-February for the garden, cover lightly. Grow on at day 17-20°C / night 15°C. Transplant after 8 weeks at 10-15°C. Lewisia has a pen-root that should not be damaged when transplanting.
Planting	: Use well-drained soil-medium, pH 5-6, careful with watering, fertiliser low-normal dose. Container size 10.5 cm (9-12 cm) or plant out at 64 plants/m ² in sunny spot..

Hardiness: USDA zone 3-8 = hardy to -12°C..

Information provided for guidance only, as cultural practices and climatic circumstances vary.

Rev 07/12