

SUBGENUS: *PENSTEMON*

Section: *Fasciculus*

Subsection: *Fasciculi*

CULTIVATION OF EACH SPECIES

Table 13

[subgenus]	PENSTEMON
[section]	<i>Ambigui</i> <i>Baccharifolii</i> <i>Chamaeleon</i> <i>Coerulei</i> <i>Cristati</i> <i>Ericopsis</i> <i>Fasciculus</i> (27) <i>Peltanthera</i> <i>Penstemon</i>
	<i>Campanulati</i> (8) <i>Fasciculi</i> (12) <i>Perfoliati</i> (3) <i>Racemosi</i> (4)
[subsection]	

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PENSTEMONS IN SECTION FASCICULUS

The Section *Fasciculus* consists of species from Mexico with red or purple flowers that have generally not yet been widely brought into cultivation in the United States. The exception is *Penstemon pinifolius*, found also in New Mexico and Arizona, a low plant with very narrow scarlet flowers and needle-like foliage, that is widely grown across this country and in other countries.”¹

The hallmark of this group is that most (not quite all) species have small bundles of leaves called fascicles in each leaf axil (upper angle formed between two structures or organs, such as a leaf and the stem from which it grows). These can grow into branches after seed pods form, each bearing fascicles, forming a very bushy plant. Rarely do they have basal leaves. Most have extremely narrow, toothed leaves that are stemless and evergreen. Long-blooming flowers are in the red to purple group, sometimes with white throats, drooping and bell-like. Heights range from 20” to 4 ½’.

¹ Lindgren, D. and Wilde, E. “Growing Penstemons Species, Cultivars and Hybrids.”

In recent years, some gardeners have enjoyed growing a few of these species as annuals. Start them in your windowsill and transplant to the out-of-doors as soon as possible. You should get several months of bloom, for example from *kunthii*, *isophyllus*, *hidalgensis* and *amphorellae*. Occasionally they will surprise you and make an appearance the next spring.

Species

<i>filisepalus</i>	<i>isophyllus</i>	<i>occiduus</i>
<i>gentianoides</i>	<i>leonensis</i>	<i>pinifolius</i>
<i>fasciculatus</i>	<i>miniatus</i>	<i>plagapineus</i>
<i>hartwegii</i>	<i>mohinoranus</i>	<i>skutchii</i>



Penstemon ilophyllus seedling



Table 13. *Penstemon Fasciculus Fasciculi*

Key
 Column 1 SPECIES: species name; plant height when in bloom; color(s) of flower; fill in lavender =popular; parenthesis = not reported in cultivation
 Column 3 CULTIVATION SUGGESTIONS:
 Row 1 SIZE OF FLOWER: **very large**= >1 ½“ **large**=1-1 3/8” **medium**= ½ - 1” **small**= < ½“
 Row 2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION
 Row 3: DISPLAY SUGGESTIONS
 Row 4: WHERE SPECIES HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY CULTIVATED OUT OF NATIVE HABITAT
 full sun  partial shade

Species	Bloom Season in Native Habitat	Cultivation Suggestions	Cultivation Needs			Elevation and Habitat	Distribution	Reported cold hardiness in cultivation
			Garden Soil	Moisture	Sun			
<i>fasciculatus</i> 2' tall 2' wide red	Aug	large flower subshrub; mat; vigorous, attractive, not readily available cultivated in: CA, AZ				limestone areas	sw. Chihuahua, Mex.	
<i>(filisepalus)</i> ~5' red	July-Sept	large flower	NA	NA	NA	alpine	Chihuahua, Mex.	
[rare]								

Most penstemons are visited by several bee species including honeybees and bumblebees. While hummingbirds prefer red penstemons, they commonly are seen at most penstemon species.

<i>gentianoides</i>	late spring-early summer	large flower hardy; rapid grower, abundant bloom atop erect stems, extremely showy trumpet-shaped blooms in colors of white, pink, red, purple and bicolors ; glossy rich green leaves add contrast; bushy clumps to 2 to 3 feet tall and wide. border, open garden, wild garden cultivated in : http://www.monrovia.com	volcanic			high elevations including above timberline; mountains; volcanic soil	Mexico City, s to Guatemala	mild climate ~ Zone 7 max
2-5' purple								
<i>hartwegii</i>	July-Sept	very large flower one of largest flowers; subshrub; continual bloom bee and hummingbird pollination;	porous	regularly; do not overwater	 or part shade	6900-9200 wooded highlands	n. of Mexico City, Hildago	hardy only in US mild coastal climates, but one source (Dave's) states: Zones 5a-9b.; others say 9-11
3 -5' red-purple								
<i>isophyllus</i>	July-Sept	widely used in hybridization for bedding plants cultivated in: Duarte, CA Kalama, WA very large flower charming; blooms first year; woody base; herbaceous; long bloom season short-lived perennial, often treated as an annual in colder climates... a delight if you can bear parting with it in the fall annual, dryland border widely used in hybridization for bedding plants; currently being tried as annual in Denver	pH 5.0-7.5; sandy with some clay		 to part sun	open wooded areas of mountains	Puebla, Oaxaca, s. and e. of Mexico City	~ Zone 7 max
2-3 ½ ' wide red								
<i>leonensis</i>	July-Aug or Sept	large flower forms good looking clump; herbaceous; much enjoyed cultivated in: England, se. WA and performed well				9800-11,000' high altitude, open pine forests	Nuevo Leon, Mex. in Sierra Madre Oriental	~ Zone 6 max
20" red-violet								
<i>(miniatus)</i>	Aug-Sept	large flower NA	NA	NA	NA	7800' open pine woodlands	Chihuahua to Oaxaca	NA
2-4' red								
[was called <i>apateticus</i>]								

<i>(mohinoranus)</i>	July-Sept	very large flower NA	NA	NA	NA	7000'	s. Chihuahua, Mex.	NA
3 ¼' red rare						open pine woodlands		
<i>(occiduus)</i>	July-Sept	large flower NA	NA	NA	NA		sw. Chihuahua and Durango	NA
2' purple rare								
<i>pinifolius</i>	May-Aug	medium flower small, shrubby mat; floriferous; popular, long lived, long blooming, hardy; dense foliage forms a clump; attracts hummingbirds; there are variants with clear yellow flowers and bright green foliage that is distinctive south facing, among rocks cultivated in: most of US, GB, Scand, European continent;	most soils		☀	6000-8500' gravelly and sandy soil on rocky slopes in hot, dry and exposed areas	sc. NM, se. AZ, n. Mex. 	hardy from west coast to New England to -20°F in Denver
6-12" tall up to 2' wide orange-red, yellow mutations May be moved into a different section in '08 EASY								
<i>(plagapineus)</i>	July-Sept	very large flower	NA	NA	NA	8550-9500' high forest	w. slope Sierra Madre Occidental in Durango, Mex.	NA
~ 3 brilliant red								
<i>(skutchii)</i>	August	not reported	NA	NA	NA	11,000'	limited area in Guatemala	
> 3' red-maroon								



Penstemon isophyllus seedling

for more photos go to:

1. this website, Library tab
2. <http://plants.usda.gov/gallery.html>
3. <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/spgm-1.4.4/gal/Penstemon/index.php?name=Penstemon%20-%2034k>

Penstemon Fasciculus Fasciculi