

SUBGENUS: *PENSTEMON*

Section: *Ambigui*

CULTIVATION OF EACH SPECIES

Table 4

[subgenus]	<i>PENSTEMON</i>
[section]	<i>Ambigui</i> (2) <i>Baccharifolii</i> <i>Chamaeleon</i> <i>Coerulei</i> <i>Cristati</i> <i>Ericopsis</i> <i>Fasciculus</i> <i>Peltanthera</i>
	<i>Penstemon</i>

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SUBGENUS *Penstemon*

“The unifying feature is that the anther sacs are hairless and , when ripe, they split fully end to end and line up at right angles to the filament. There are a few exceptions to this rule, but the chances are that if you see four tiny gaping mouths facing you when you look at a flower then you are in subgenus *Penstemon*”

Flower corolla lobes are almost at right angles to the corolla tube; pinkish in color

Species in *Penstemon Ambigui*

ambiguus

thurberi

Table 4
Subgenus *Penstemon*
Section *Ambigui*

Key

Column 1 SPECIES: _species name; plant height when in bloom; color(s) of flower; fill in lavender = easy to grow and 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	Cultivation Suggestions	Cultivation Needs			Elevation and Habitat	Distribution	Reported cold hardiness in cultivation
			Soil	Moisture	Sun			
<i>ambiguus</i> 8-9 ½” x 12 ½” wide pale to deep pink	May onward	medium flower phlox-like flowers by the hundreds; bushy; stems woody above the base; diffusely branched; self sows; older plants spread widely; may rebloom after summer rains Perfectly symmetrical 2 ft. bush, laden with flowers in spring. Phlox-like flowers are white to pink. Needs sandy, well-drained soil.	sand and gravel beds, unimproved sandy loam	10-15” per year		2500-6400 sandy slopes and mesas, creosote bush, blackbrush, sagebrush and juniper communities	NV, UT, CO, KS, AZ, NM, TX, n Chihuahua 	Zones 4-6
<i>thurberi</i> up to 30” lavender-pink	April-Aug	cultivated in: WA, OR, IA, MI, PA, ME, southwest medium flower excellent showy display over long period; shrub, branching stems; as wide as tall; plants die back and can be cut to woody base each year; attracts hummingbirds; to Zone 5. Widely offered on the web. dryland or native plant garden mod climates CA, PA, VA; cut back to woody base in spring	sandy	drought tolerant		4000 sandy soil and scrub oak communities; Sonoran Desert scrub, and pinyon and juniper woodland; both sandy and rocky plains; mountain of the desert	s. CA, n. Baja, s. NM, s. AZ TX distribution may be an error	to 10° F It froze Dec. 1990 frost in the ground at 0 F. It looked better than ever afterwards. We didn't have it in containers at the time so I'm not sure how much more hardy it is. It has been stable here for years. ¹

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.



Penstemon thurberi



Penstemon ambiguus