



The Perennial Plant Association has named *Stachys monieri* 'Hummelo' as the 2019 Perennial Plant of the Year. We have touted this perennial as a favorite of ours for several years, encouraging our customers to give this relatively unknown plant a try. It certainly deserves a place in the sunny garden, and we are pleased it is getting the recognition it deserves as Perennial of the Year.

'Hummelo' is a cousin to the familiar Lamb's Ears, also in the *Stachys* family, yet it is not at all similar. It is a clump-forming perennial and forms a low mound of long and narrow, textured green leaves. In early summer, sturdy spikes of bright purple flowers appear

high above the foliage and put on quite a display, and attract our friendly bee pollinators. Removing faded flowers will encourage more buds to continue forming for several weeks. When planted in masses of five or seven or more plants, it puts on a fantastic display. Once the bloom is finished, flower spikes can be cut back hard, leaving a very nice-looking clump of foliage on display for the rest of the season.

This easy to grow perennial grows best in full to partial sunlight, is generally free of diseases and resistant to deer and rabbits. Clumps grow about 18 inches wide and flower spikes reach a height of 18-20 inches. It is hardy to zone 4.

Clumps can easily be divided in early spring, and should be divided every 3-4 years if plants become woody in the center.

*Stachys m.* 'Hummelo' is commonly known as Betony, which is still a not-so-common name. 'Hummelo' will make a unique addition to any sunny garden, and is complementary to just about everything else, including *Coreopsis*, *Echinacea*, *Asclepias* (2018 Perennial of the Year), and ornamental grasses. —Molly Hornbaker Blogg

