

Caryopteris clandonensis 'Dark Knight' Bluebeard Plant

Photos and article by: Sumathy Vannarth 9/15/2020



Location: Herb garden bed

Scientific name: *Caryopteris*

Common name: Bluebeard

Caryopteris is highly valued plant for its late summer flowers when very few other plants are blooming. The name *Caryopteris* came from Greek *Karyon* meaning 'nut' and *pteron* means 'wing'. Winged nuts are formed on this plant. The base petal of bright blue flowers is elongated and has beard. This plant originated as an accidental hybrid of *Caryopteris incana* and *caryopteris mongholica*.

The plants are of low maintenance, drought tolerant; grow in full sun or partial shade. Hardiness zone is 6 to 9. Blooming time is late summer to fall. Clusters of blue flowers are seen in terminal and axillary cymes on current year shoots. Leaves are opposite, ovate, lance shaped, simple to serrate, gray green above with silvery beneath. Leaves and flowers are aromatic. Flowers are nectar producing and very attractive to butterflies, bees, humming birds and other pollinators. Pruning is done in early spring.

Propagation: Bluebeard may self-seed and the new plants can be transplanted. Soft wood cutting in late spring may be used to produce new plants.