

Chionodoxa forbesii (ky-oh-no-DOKS-a FORBS-ee-eye)

Hyacinthaceae

Synonym: *Chionodoxa luciliae*



Blue flowers in spring – definitely don't give us the blues! We have many to choose from, but the one I love best is Glory of the Snow. The flowers look up, and their bright centres make them really stand out amongst all that brown. This early spring bulb self seeds to create a blue carpet in spring, yet it doesn't interfere with other plants. It's a fantastic groundcover under deciduous trees.

Because it is early to flower, it is often seen peeking through the snow – hence the common name. It's hardy to zone 3, and thrives in any well drained soil. It will grow in full sun or part shade.



Anything that flowers just as the bees are waking up is an important plant as far as I'm concerned. The deer have never touched it – even better! There is a white variety (*alba*), as well as two larger flowered forms – 'Blue Giant' and 'Pink Giant'.

Chionodoxa sardensis is a slightly smaller species, with dark blue flowers. *C. Forbesii* are native to the mountains of Southern Turkey. They were first described in horticulture literature in 1877. In the wild, they are found along the woodland edge.

Above, *Scilla siberica* and *Chionodoxa* carpet the ground under the birches. Below, they are rapidly colonizing the bank under the weeping Mulberry.

Chionodoxa and *Scilla siberica* pop up through *Erica carnea* 'Springwood White'. Notice how the flower of the *Scilla* looks down, while the *Chionodoxa* faces the camera. Nothing shy about this plant!



Suggested companion plants would include *Eranthis* (winter aconite), *Puschkinia* (striped squill), and early flowering narcissus.

As fall bulbs go, *Chionodoxa* aren't expensive. Treat yourself to a few bulbs next fall – you'll be richly rewarded.