Mexican Petunia

Ruellia brittoniana

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 18 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Ruellia simplex, Chi Chi, Wild Petunia,

Description:

This variety is quite adaptable, tolerating average to wet conditions in any kind of soil; abundant pink or purple flowers all season long; cut back stems to encourage re-blooming; will spread by rhizomes; beautiful when massed in borders

Ornamental Features

Mexican Petunia features showy pink trumpet-shaped flowers with purple overtones at the ends of the stems from late winter to mid fall. Its narrow leaves are dark green in color with hints of steel blue. The foliage often turns burgundy in fall.

Landscape Attributes

Mexican Petunia is an herbaceous annual with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep. Trim off the flower heads after they fade and die to encourage more blooms late into the season. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spreading
- Invasive



Mexican Petunia flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Mexican Petunia
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Mexican Petunia is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Bog Gardens

Planting & Growing

Mexican Petunia will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 18 inches apart. Although it's not a true annual, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It is quite adaptable, prefering to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It is not particular as to soil type or pH, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Mexican Petunia is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.