Peruvian Heliotrope

Heliotropium peruvianum

Height: 20 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Spacing: 15 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Common Heliotrope, Cherry Pie Plant



Peruvian Heliotrope flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Peruvian Heliotrope in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Description:

Sweet fragrant clusters of purple, white or blue flowers are featured on lush upright mounded plants with deeply veined, dark green leaves; excellent in borders, beds and containers; adaptable as a houseplant; deadhead to encourage new blooms

Ornamental Features

Peruvian Heliotrope has masses of beautiful clusters of fragrant violet flowers with blue overtones and white centers at the ends of the stems from late spring to early fall, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its textured pointy leaves remain green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Peruvian Heliotrope 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, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Peruvian Heliotrope is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

Planting & Growing

Peruvian Heliotrope will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 18 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 15 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. Although it's not a true annual, this 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 does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. 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, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division.

Peruvian Heliotrope is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. 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. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.