Rubiginosa Alternanthera

Alternanthera dentata 'Rubiginosa'



Rubiginosa Alternanthera foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 18 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Calico Plant, Joy Weed, Christmas Clover

Description:

This showy, heat loving ground cover plant is perfect as a landscape edging plant, and is great for basing containers, tolerates partial shade, but most vivid purple color is produced in full sun

Ornamental Features

Rubiginosa Alternanthera's attractive glossy pointy leaves emerge dark red in spring, turning deep purple in color the rest of the year on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth.

Landscape Attributes

Rubiginosa Alternanthera is a dense 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, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Rubiginosa Alternanthera is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Rubiginosa Alternanthera will grow to be about 24 inches 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. 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 pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Rubiginosa Alternanthera 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.