Clasping Heliotrope

Heliotropium amplexicaule



Clasping Heliotrope flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 3 inches

Flower Height: 4 inches

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 6

Other Names: Blue Heliotrope, Summer Heliotrope

Description:

A low growing, spreading evergreen perennial clothed with hairy, toothed leaves that appear to clasp the stems; violet flowers with gold centers for a long period from spring to fall; will re-sprout from roots in colder zones

Ornamental Features

Clasping Heliotrope has masses of beautiful clusters of violet flowers with gold eyes at the ends of the stems from late spring to early fall, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its pointy leaves remain green in color throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

Clasping Heliotrope is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with a ground-hugging 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.



Clasping Heliotrope in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spreading
- Suckering

Clasping Heliotrope is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Clasping Heliotrope will grow to be only 3 inches tall at maturity extending to 4 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 24 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant performs well in both full sun and full 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 covering it with a thick layer of mulch 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.

Clasping Heliotrope is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its spreading habit of growth, it is ideally suited for use as a 'spiller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the edges where it can spill gracefully over the pot. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.