Red Spiderwort

Tradescantia virginiana 'Rubra'



Red Spiderwort flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 18 inches

Flower Height: 24 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 18 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 3

Other Names: Virginia Spiderwort, Widow's Tears, Spider Lily

Description:

A clump forming variety that may get up to three feet tall; short lived flowers bloom from terminal clusters in succession; pretty red-pink blooms emerge over iris-like foliage; perfect for shaded gardens

Ornamental Features

Red Spiderwort has masses of beautiful clusters of hot pink flowers with rose overtones and yellow eyes at the ends of the stems from early summer to early fall, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its narrow leaves remain green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Red Spiderwort is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

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 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.

Red Spiderwort is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Red Spiderwort will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity extending to 24 inches tall with the flowers, 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. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen! As this plant tends to go dormant in summer, it is best interplanted with late-season bloomers to hide the dying foliage.

This plant does best in partial shade to full shade. Keep it well away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in poor soils. 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 is a selection of a native North American species. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Red Spiderwort 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. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.