Heart Copperleaf

Acalypha wilkesiana f. macrophylla



Heart Copperleaf foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Wilkes' Acalypha, Copper Plant

Description:

Grown as an annual in colder areas, this variety will grow up to 4 feet in one season; in frost free areas it can become a large shrub; large, heart shaped leaves in shades of green, coppery red, and orange are impressive in the garden, or containers

Ornamental Features

Heart Copperleaf's attractive large serrated heart-shaped leaves emerge coppery-bronze in spring, turning dark green in color with showy dark red variegation and tinges of orange the rest of the year on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth.

Landscape Attributes

Heart Copperleaf is a multi-stemmed 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 be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects
- Disease

Heart Copperleaf is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

Planting & Growing

Heart Copperleaf will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground. 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 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. This plant should not require much in the way of fertilizing once established, although it may appreciate a shot of general-purpose fertilizer from time to time early in the growing season. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. 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.

Heart Copperleaf is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base 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.