Red Fred Begonia

Begonia 'Red Fred'



Red Fred Begonia foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 12 inches

Flower Height: 24 inches

Spread: 30 inches

Spacing: 24 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Group/Class: Tuberous Begonia



Red Fred Begonia in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Description:

A spectacular mounded begonia presenting glossy, deep maroon, rounded heart-shaped foliage; small pink and red flowers rise on branched spikes in late winter; grows well in hot and humid conditions; great for containers, hanging baskets or gardens

Ornamental Features

Red Fred Begonia's attractive glossy heart-shaped leaves emerge burgundy in spring, turning bluish-green in color with showy burgundy variegation and tinges of crimson the rest of the year on a plant with a low base above which the flowers rise. It features dainty panicles of pink cup-shaped flowers rising above the foliage from late winter to mid spring.

Landscape Attributes

Red Fred Begonia is an herbaceous annual with tall flower stalks held atop a low mound of foliage. Its wonderfully bold, coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced garden composition.

This is a high maintenance plant that will require regular care and upkeep, and usually looks its best without pruning, although it will tolerate pruning. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Disease

Red Fred Begonia is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Red Fred Begonia will grow to be about 12 inches tall at maturity extending to 24 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 30 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 24 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. The flower stalks can be weak and so it may require staking in exposed sites or excessively rich soils. 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 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 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. 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, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone over the growing season to conserve soil moisture. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid. It can be propagated by cuttings; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Red Fred Begonia 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.