

Verbena canadensis - Verbena

Common Name(s): Verbena, Clump verbena, Rosa verbena

Categories: Groundcover, Perennials

Season: Late spring to fall

Height: 8-18 inches

Flower Color: Red, pink, white, purple

Hardiness: USDA Hardiness Zone 6-10

Foliage: Shiny dark green leaves 3 to 4 inches long

Flower: Dense flower cluster

Habit: Deciduous to semi-evergreen

Site/Sun: Range of soil types including sandy and infertile soils; Well-drained; Full Sun

Size: Height 4-12 inches with a spread of 2 feet

Form: Low growing

Regions: North Carolina Mountains, Piedmont, and Coastal Plain

Comments: A variety of cultivars are available, some that flower spring to first frost. Plant has good drought tolerance once established. Flowers are very attractive to butterflies, and deer only occasionally damage this plant. As a spreading plant, *Verbena canadensis* is native from Virginia to Florida where it spreads in sunny, well-drained areas.



Flower Clusters (Photo by Lisa Williams)



Verbena canadensis

Currituck Master Gardeners Plant of the Month – September 2017

When, Where, and How to Plant

Verbena can be planted from early spring through early fall. Once established, clumps can be dug up and separated, and plant cuttings root easily during summer in any type of soil. Prostrate growing branches that have rooted while lying on the ground can also be transplanted to different locations. Verbena likes warm, sunny locations. Space plants 5 to 6 feet apart at planting. If plant's roots have become pot bound, be sure to force the roots apart before planting. Water plants thoroughly immediately after planting, as this is critical for proper establishment.

Growing Tips

After planting, water every third day for several weeks. During the summer, water once weekly. A granular garden fertilizer can be applied in spring, and again in the summer if growth is slow. Do not allow fertilizer to remain on the leaves and do not over fertilize as this can cause the plant to lose some color. Fall fertilization can increase the possibility of cold damage to the plant and is not advised.

Care

In western areas of the state, it is advisable to take cuttings of this tender perennial in September and carry them over as potted plants indoors. Some plants may be lost if early cold sets in and the plants haven't hardened off properly. Mulch the beds with pine needles in early December for added protection. In other areas of the state, moderate pruning and cleaning are acceptable in December or late winter when the plant is dormant. On the coast, prune at will in order to increase blooms. Verbenas exhibit some resistance to pests such as leaf miners. However, if mites and leaf miners are found, remove affected leaves or use plant oil sprays.

Companion Planting and Design

Interplant in blue beds, with daylilies, or with variegated foliage plants. A popular combination is Verbena 'Homestead purple' teamed with the gold foliage of the mops cypress and lemon spirea. It also adds extra color and texture to containers and perennial borders.

Bloom Period and Season Color

Verbena flowers exhibit deep purple, red, pink, lavender, and white colored blossoms depending on the cultivar. Mature height and spread is 8 inch tall by 24 to 36 inches across.

Source: The Carolinas Gardener's Guide by Toby Boost and Jim Wilson

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/verbena-canadensis/>