Introduction
Porterweed is a small perennial shrub that becomes woody toward the base of the stem as it grows to about one year old. Plants grow about 4 feet tall by 6 feet wide before stems droop and touch the ground. Blue or pink flowers are borne terminally on long, stringy spikes at the ends of the stems. They attract butterflies to the landscape. Rich, dark green foliage displayed on square, green stems makes porterweed a nice addition to any sunny landscape.

General Information
Scientific name: Stachytarpheta jamaicensis
Pronunciation: stake-kee-tar-FEE-tuh jah-may-SEN-sis
Common name(s): blue porterweed
Family: Verbenaceae
Plant type: shrub; perennial; herbaceous
USDA hardiness zones: 10 through 11 (Fig. 1)
Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: hedge; border; mass planting; attracts butterflies
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description
Height: 4 to 8 feet
Spread: 4 to 8 feet
Plant habit: round
Plant density: dense
Growth rate: fast
Texture: medium

Flower
Flower color: pink; blue
Flower characteristic: summer flowering; fall flowering

Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.
**Stachytarpheta jamaicensis Blue Porterweed**

### Fruit
- **Fruit shape:** unknown
- **Fruit length:** unknown
- **Fruit cover:** unknown
- **Fruit color:** unknown
- **Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

### Trunk and Branches
- **Trunk/bark/branches:** not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems
- **Current year stem/twig color:** green
- **Current year stem/twig thickness:** thin

### Culture
- **Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun
- **Soil tolerances:** acidic; alkaline; sand; loam; clay
- **Drought tolerance:** high
- **Soil salt tolerances:** unknown
- **Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

### Other
- **Roots:** usually not a problem
- **Winter interest:** no special winter interest
- **Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
- **Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive
- **Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

### Use and Management
Porterweed is frequently used in a mass planting along a foundation, or as a clipped or natural unclipped hedge to provide continuous color to the landscape. Space plants about 3 to 4 feet apart. A row will maintain a nice uniform shape for 6 or more months without pruning. Regular clipping can maintain a uniform shape for more than a year before the plant needs to be cut back to thicken the growth. Unclipped plants begin to open up as stems droop to the ground. For this reason, they are usually cut back each year, or any time the plant becomes leggy. This allows new growth to fill in and thicken the plant.

Locate porterweed in a sunny location in any soil. Provide irrigation during establishment and then in extended drought in the summer. Fertilize about twice each year to maintain foliage color and provide for continuous growth.

### Pest and Diseases
No serious pests or diseases are known to affect porterweed.