

Coreopsis spp. Tickseed, Coreopsis¹

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Introduction

Seven species of coreopsis are native to the state of Florida (Fig. 1). One species, *Coreopsis leavenworthii*, has been named Florida's state flower. Coreopsis are considered perennials as they reappear each year. These colorful plants have bright green leaves that can be either entire or lobed. These plants have single or double flowers that come in a variety of colors: orange, pink, purple, red, and yellow. These lovely flowers are held upright upon tall leafless stems that enable the blooms to be beautifully incorporated into flower arrangements. The flowers are borne in capitula with a small disc, and the ray florets have dentate tips. These 1 1/2- to 2-inch-wide flowers appear in the spring, summer, and fall.

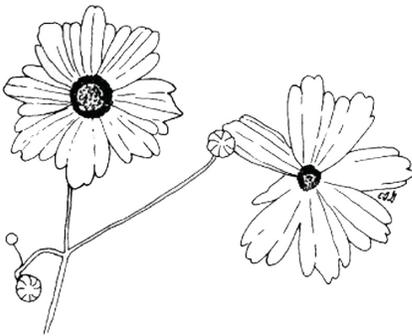


Figure 1. Tickseed.

General Information

Scientific name: *Coreopsis* spp.

Pronunciation: kor-ree-OP-sis species

Common name(s): tickseed, coreopsis

Family: *Compositae*

Plant type: herbaceous; annual

USDA hardiness zones: 4 through 10 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: May; Jun

Planting month for zone 8: Apr; May

Planting month for zone 9: Apr; May; Jun; Jul; Aug; Sep

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: Mar; Apr

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: edging; mass planting; attracts butterflies

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Description

Height: 1 to 3 feet

Spread: 1 to 3 feet

Plant habit: upright

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Plant density: open
Growth rate: moderate
Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: lobed
Leaf shape: oblong
Leaf venation: not applicable
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: not applicable
Fall characteristic: not applicable

Flower

Flower color: red; pink; purple; orange; yellow
Flower characteristic: spring flowering; summer flowering; fall flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: no fruit
Fruit length: no fruit
Fruit cover: no fruit
Fruit color: not applicable
Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable
Current year stem/twig color: green
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay
Drought tolerance: high
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 6 to 12 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: not applicable
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: may self-seed each year
Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Coreopsis species are generally short-lived and may only last 3 to 4 seasons. Try using these plants as a border or edge. They are also excellent for naturalizing and will reseed themselves. The stalks become long and weak and tend to break in windy or rainy weather. Dwarf varieties may be selected for more polished plants. *C. lanceolata* grows about 15 to 18 inches tall but is not well suited for central and south Florida.

Coreopsis requires a sunny position in the landscape. They prefer well-drained soils that are not too rich; rich soils and overwatering cause these plants to topple over. Keep the soil relatively moist and remove dead flowers immediately to prolong blooming. Taller species of coreopsis may need support. Place these plants 6 to 12 inches apart in the garden.

The cultivar 'Early Sunrise' flowers sooner than others.

Seed is the most common method of propagation for coreopsis. Division can also be accomplished in the spring or fall.

Pests and Diseases

Leaf spots, rust, powdery mildew, aphids, leaf beetles, and mites may be occasional problems. Spotted cucumber beetles eat holes in the leaves.

Leaf spots may be seen but are usually not serious.