Barleria cristata: Crested Philippine Violet[1]

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Introduction

The crested Philippine violet is an herbaceous perennial that attains a height of 36 to 48 inches. Leaf tissue is puckered around the veins which appear recessed. The plant remains dense in the full sun creating a nice barrier planting. The dark green foliage is medium in texture and becomes hard and "prickly" after freezing weather. White or lavender flowers appear on this plant in the late summer and early fall.

Figure 1. Full Form - *Barleria cristata*: Crested Philippine Violet.
Credits: undefined

Figure 2. Leaf - *Barleria cristata*: Crested Philippine Violet.
Credits: undefined

Figure 3. Flower - Barleria cristata: Crested Philippine Violet.
Credits: Edward F. Gilman

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General Information

Scientific name: *Barleria cristata*

Pronunciation: bar-LEER-ee-uh kriss-STAY-tuh

Common name(s): crestedPhilippine violet, Philippine violet, bluebell barleria, barleria

Family: *Acanthaceae*

Plant type: perennial; herbaceous

USDA hardiness zones: 9 through 11 (Figure 4)

Figure 4. Shaded area represents potential planting range.
Credits: undefined

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: native to temperate Asia and tropical Asia

Invasive potential: not considered a problem species at this time and may be recommended by UF/IFAS faculty (reassess in 10 years)

Uses: superior hedge; foundation; border

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

Description

Height: 4 to 6 feet

Spread: 3 to 4 feet

Plant habit: upright

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: ovate

Leaf venation: bowed; pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: pink; white

Flower characteristic: 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 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; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay;

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: poor

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

The crested Philippine violet is a good background or specimen plant but also looks nice when massed. It can be used for a hedge or border planting to create a wall effect in a garden or landscape. It will stay small enough for use along a house foundation provided they are not placed in front of a low window. Plants in the northern part of its range will be killed to the ground in freezing temperatures. Cut them back to clean the plant of dead foliage and stems. New growth emerges in the spring from the base of the stems.

Place *Barleria cristata* in an area of the landscape that receives full sun or partial shade. This plant prefers well-drained soils and is drought tolerant. Prune the crested Philippine violet to the ground each spring to maintain a bushy plant. Wear gloves when cleaning up this plant in the spring; the leaves become coarse after freezing and could irritate exposed skin.

Barleria cristata is "weedy" and will readily reseed itself and can invade adjacent land. Seeds and cuttings may be used for its propagation.

Pests and Diseases

None of major concern.