

Exacum affine Persian Violet, German Violet¹

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Introduction

The German violet is a 6 to 12inchtall annual that is popular for its beautiful blue flowers and shiny green foliage. The tiny leaves of this rounded plant are ovate in shape and densely cover the stems. Lovely blue flowers with bright yellow pollen masses in their centers appear in the spring and summer. These fragrant flowers will densely clothe this plant if it is grown under the proper cultural conditions. *Exacum affine* creates a nice ground cover and is quite charming when grown in a container.

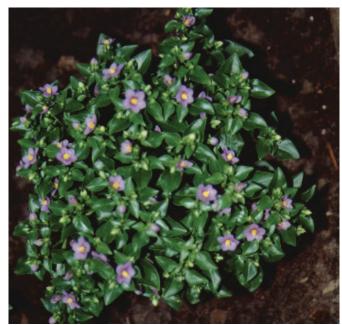


Figure 1. Full Form - Exacum affine: Persian Violet, German Violet Credits: Edward F. Gilman. UF/IFAS

General Information

Scientific name: Exacum affine

Pronunciation: ECK-suh-kum af-FYE-nee

Common name(s): German violet, Persian violet

Family: Gentianaceae

Plant type: annual; biennial

USDA hardiness zones: all zones (Figure 2)

Planting month for zone 7: Jun

Planting month for zone 8: May; Aug; Sep

Planting month for zone 9: Apr; Sep; Oct

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: Nov; Dec; Jan

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Uses: edging; border

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

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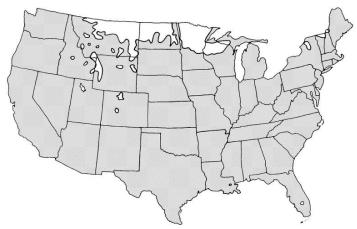


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Description

Height: 0.5 to 2 feet

Spread: 0.5 to 1 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: ovate

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: not applicable

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: not applicable

Fall characteristic: not applicable

Flower

Flower color: blue

Flower characteristic: showy

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: medium

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: acidic; sand; loam; clay

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Plant spacing: 6 to 12 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable

Winter interest: not applicable

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

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

Use and Management

This annual requires a partial shade position in the landscape. It needs a light, well-drained soil that has plenty of peat and perlite. German violets are tender to cold and should be protected in the winter months. These plants require a moderate amount of fertilization and watering. Propagate the German violet by seed. The seeds of this plant are quite tiny and germinate in two to three weeks.

Pests and Diseases

Gray mold is a major problem with German violet seeds, and the broad mite is a damaging insect. Worms and mites may also be occasional problems.