

Arkansas Diamonds Plants

(*Tradescantia pallida* 'Purple Heart')

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General Information

Purple Heart

Scientific Name: *Tradescantia pallida* 'Purple Heart'

Pronunciation: trad-es-KAN-tee-uh PAL-lid-duh

Common Name: Moses in the Basket; Purple Heart; Purple Queen; Purple Spiderwort

Family: *Commelinaceae*

Plant Type: tender perennial

Uses: accent; border; mass plantings; small groups

USDA Hardiness Zones: 7A through 11B

Origin: Native to Mexico

Availability: Widely available in the trade

Description

Height: 12-24 inches

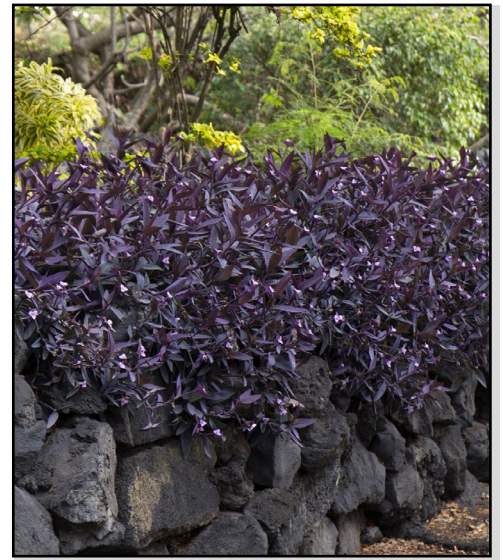
Spread: 12-24 inches

Plant Habit/Form: Clumping

Growth Rate: Medium

Texture: Medium

Figure 1. Purple Heart



Flowers

Color: Pink

Flower Value to Gardener: Showy

Bloom Time: Summer

Shape: Star

Petals: 2-3 petals/ray

Size: < 1 inch

Description: Flowers are bright pink or with a white midline (rarely white), terminal, about 1 inch, with 3 equal petals and 3 sepals, subtended by a pair of ovate-acuminate bracts (7 cm); peduncles 6-11 cm

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Leaves

Color: Purple/lavender

Feel: Leathery/slippery

Shape: Simple

Length: 3-6 inches

Description: Leaves are alternate, simple, and oblong-elliptic to oblong-lanceolate. They are acute, blade sessile with a closed sheath, margins in rolled to give trough shape, red-dish-purple above and below

Culture

Light Requirement: Full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day)

Partial shade (Direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours)

Soil Tolerances: Tolerant of wide variety of soils

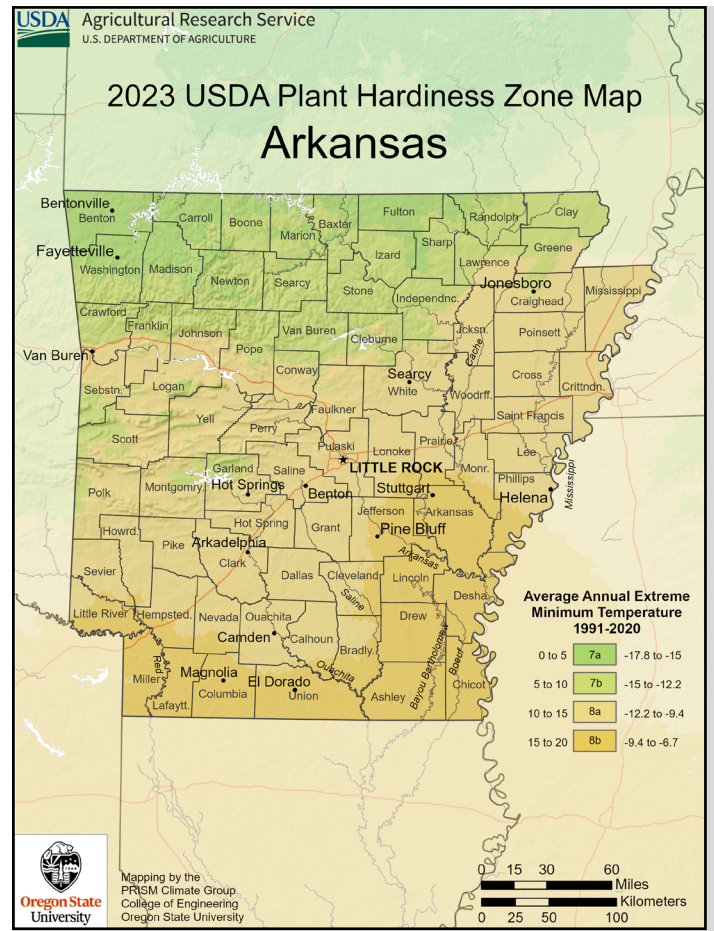
Drought Tolerance: Moderate

Plant Spacing: Less than 12 inches up to 36 inches

Use and Management

'Purple Heart' is a tender perennial cultivar commonly used in the landscape as an annual in containers, hanging baskets, as a houseplant, on slopes and banks, as well as growing vertically along a trellis. In most parts of Arkansas, this plant should be

Figure 2: USDA Hardiness zones represented in Arkansas.



treated as an annual; however, this plant may come back as a perennial when planted into protected areas or in mild winters. While this plant can handle partial sun, full sun is necessary for best color development. Plants grown in shadier environments will tend to have a more greenish tint. This plant is prized for its purple foliage instead of its flower, as each flower only lasts one day.



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