False Heather

Cuphea hyssopifolia

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 30 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Mexican Heather



False Heather flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Description:

Small, freely branching shrub or subshrub with dainty lavender tubular flowers that open to a star shape; flowers year round in warmer climates; great for bedding, shrub borders, and containers



False Heather in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

False Heather features dainty lavender tubular flowers along the branches from late spring to late summer. Its attractive glossy narrow leaves emerge light green in spring, turning green in color the rest of the year.

Landscape Attributes

False Heather is a multi-stemmed annual with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

False Heather is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

False Heather will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. Although it's not a true annual, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.

False Heather is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.