Jacob's Coat

Acalypha wilkesiana



Jacob's Coat foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 10

Other Names: Copperleaf, syn. Acalypha tricolor

Description:

Widely grown as an annual in colder areas, this variety will grow up to 4 feet in one season; in frost free areas it can become a very large shrub; stunning multicolor leaves are impressive in the garden, or containers; overwinter indoors in a bright spot

Ornamental Features

Jacob's Coat has attractive plum purple-variegated dark green foliage with hints of red which emerges coppery-bronze in spring on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth. The serrated oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Jacob's Coat is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects
- Disease

Jacob's Coat is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

Planting & Growing

Jacob's Coat will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets.

Jacob's Coat makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base 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 grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.