

# Jacob's Ladder *Polemonium reptans*

**Plant Type:** Native Perennial Wildflower

**Sun Exposure:** Part Sun, Shade

**Season of Interest:** Spring, Summer

**Bloom Time:** Spring Summer

**Bloom Color:** White to Blue

**Height:** 12 to 28 in.

**Spread:** 24 to 36 in.

**Spacing:** 36 in.

**Water Needs:** Above average

**Maintenance:** Very Little

**Soil Type:** Loam, Not drought tolerant

**Soil pH:** Neutral

**Soil Drainage:** Well drained

**Pests:** Slugs

**Diseases:** None

**Wildlife:** Bees, Butterflies



**Description:** Jacob's ladder, also known as spreading Jacob's ladder, or creeping Jacob's ladder, is a fine spring and summer blooming addition to the home garden. The delicate, bell-shaped light blue flowers provide beautiful color and an interesting texture. It grows in mounding clusters with flowering stems that reach 12 to 24 inches in height. This plant comes by its name because its lacy oval leaflets that are arranged on stems like the rungs of a ladder. The foliage is dark green with thin white margins. Its small leaves make the perfect backdrop for the slate-blue, bell-shaped flowers that are held atop long, upright stems. The foliage looks fresh and green all through the growing season and provides an attractive green groundcover and backdrop for summer-blooming perennials. It blooms from April to early July, providing not only beauty but also essential nourishment for pollinators. The flowers are an important source of pollen and nectar for native bees. New flowers open every day, renewing the supply. Native bees drink the nectar and gather pollen and nectar for their nests. Butterflies are also drawn to the nectar. For More information see: [plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/polemonium-reptans](https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/polemonium-reptans) .



**Care and Growing Tips:** This herbaceous perennial grows well in partial to full shade and is therefore a perfect plant for bringing color into shady areas. It prefers fertile, moist, well-drained soil and thrives in a naturalized area or in the understory. It is bothered by few pests and is resistant to deer and rabbits. Deadheading can be done to encourage continuous bloom. Cut the flower stalks back to the base of the plant. After flowering, cut the plant back by one-third to stimulate re-bloom.

Larger clumps of Jacob's ladder can be divided in late summer. Additionally, with ideal conditions plants will self-seed. Choose this easy-to-grow, reliable plant for your garden, placing it under trees or intermingling it with other flowering natives. Starting in mid-spring, you—and the pollinators in your yard—will be rewarded with the light, sweet fragrance of its lovely sky-blue flowers.