

Smooth Petunia

Ruellia strepens

Plant Type: Native Perennial Wildflower

Sun Exposure: Part Sun, Shade

Season of Interest: Spring, Summer

Bloom Time: Spring, Summer

Bloom Color: Lavender to Purple

Height: 16 to 32 in.

Spread: 12 to 18 in.

Spacing: 18 in.

Water Needs: Average

Maintenance: Very little

Soil Type: Clay, Loam, Dandy, Rocky

Soil pH: Acidic, Neutral, Alkaline

Soil Drainage: Well drained

Pests: None

Diseases: None

Wildlife: Bees, Butterflies, Hummingbirds



Description: Smooth wild petunia has large purple blooms that occur in the leaf axils of the plant. But make sure to pay attention because each flower only lasts for one or two days. The blooming period occurs during late spring through mid summer for two to three months. This plant prefers some shade and will often suffer from leaf scorching if grown in full sun. This plant



typically occurs in rich open woods, thickets and along the borders of streams and ponds throughout east Tennessee. It is a nearly hairless compared to other species of *Ruellia* and grows 16 to 32 inches tall. It features lovely lavender to purple petunia-like flowers up to 2 inches long with five flaring lobes. Seeds are produced in pods that explode when ripe, projecting seeds outward, and causing this plant to move around a bit in the garden by reseeding. This can be prevented by removing the seed pods. For more information see: davesgarden.com/guides/pf/go/38234.

Care and Growing Tips: It is fairly easy to look after smooth wild petunia plants in the garden. They like a moist yet well drained soil that is high in organic matter, so keep well watered and apply a spring mulch. This plant can be grown in partial sunlight (for best blooms) to full shade and is well adapted to hot humid environments. Very versatile, it performs best in moist soils, though can also grow in average soils with good drainage that are kept moist, and becomes drought tolerant once established. In some environments it can spread aggressively through self-seeding.