Purple Leaf Corydalis

Corydalis flexuosa 'Purple Leaf'

Height: 12 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 5a

Other Names: Purple Dragon, Fumitory

Description:

Vigorous growing and early blooming this selection presents beautiful deep purple and green leaves with contrasting fragrant violet blooms; may go summer dormant in hot climates; excellent for use in borders and perennial beds

Ornamental Features

Purple Leaf Corydalis has masses of beautiful spikes of fragrant violet trumpet-shaped flowers rising above the foliage from mid spring to late summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its attractive ferny compound leaves emerge deep purple in spring, turning bluish-green in colour with prominent deep purple tips the rest of the year. The dark red stems can be quite attractive.

Landscape Attributes

Purple Leaf Corydalis is a dense herbaceous evergreen perennial with a mounded form. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Purple Leaf Corydalis is recommended for the following landscape applications;

Purple Leaf Corydalis flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Purple Leaf Corydalis flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Purple Leaf Corydalis will grow to be about 12 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 18 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round. As this plant tends to go dormant in summer, it is best interplanted with late-season bloomers to hide the dying foliage.

This plant performs well in both full sun and full shade. It requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in both summer and winter to conserve soil moisture and protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Purple Leaf Corydalis is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers and foliage against which the thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.