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Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM

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Browallia speciosa: Browallia, Amethyst Flower[1]

Keighly Graves, Wendy Wilber, Tom Wichman, Claire Lewis, Gail Hansen, and Ryan Klein[2]

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This Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ publication is part of a series originally written by Edward F. Gilman. Visit https://ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/ to learn more about creating and maintaining attractive landscapes that protect Florida's water resources and environment.

Introduction

Browallia (*Browallia speciosa*) is a warm season perennial that is generally grown as an annual. It has a rounded growth form and reaches a height and spread up to 2 feet (Figure 1). It is notable for its showy purplish-blue flowers (certain cultivars display white flowers), which bloom from spring through fall (Figure 2). The leaves are ovate and are between 2 and 4 inches long (Figure 3). Browallia is well suited for containers, planted en masse, or may be used as cut flowers. Cultivars with a variety of growth habits and flower coloration are available in the horticultural trade.



Figure 1. Full form—*Browallia speciosa*: amethyst flower.
Credit: © dmehlman, some rights reserved (CC BY-NC) via iNaturalist



Figure 2. Flower—*Browallia speciosa* 'Endless™ Flirtation': amethyst flower hybrid.
Credit: Proven Winners



Figure 3. Leaf—*Browallia speciosa*: amethyst flower.
Credit: © Nolan Exe, some rights reserved (CC BY) via iNaturalist

General Information

Scientific name: *Browallia speciosa*

Pronunciation: bro-WAL-ee-uh spee-see-O-suh

Common name(s): Browallia, amethyst flower, bush violet

Family: *Solanaceae*

Plant type: tender perennial; annual

USDA hardiness zones: all zones (Figures 5 and 6)

USDA Hardiness Zones 3B-11A

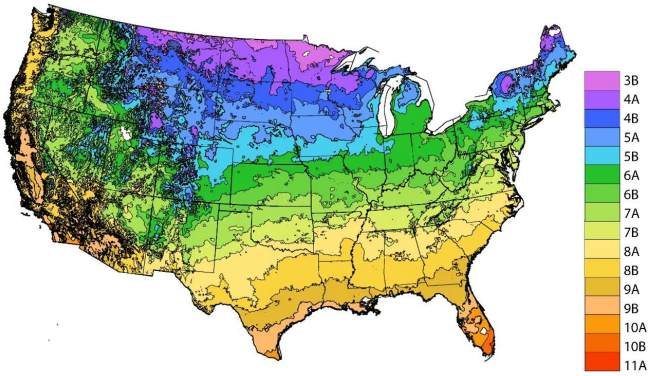


Figure 5. Shaded area represents potential planting zone—USDA Hardiness Zones 3B–11A; 11B within planting zone but not pictured on map.
Credit: This map is based on the 2023 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map. Visit https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/ for specific zone information.

USDA Hardiness Zones 7B-11A

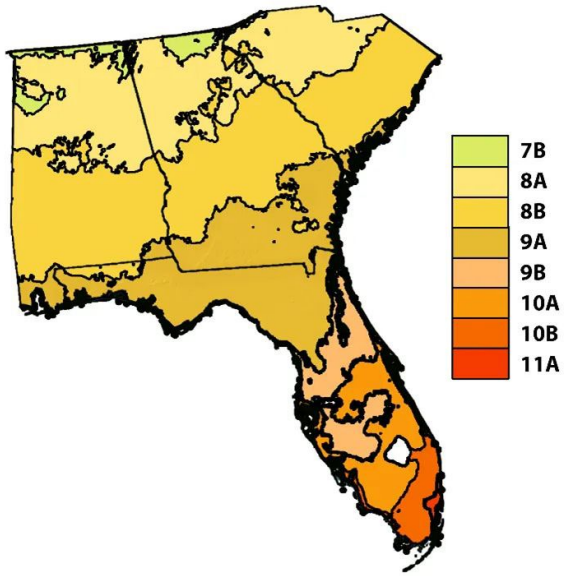


Figure 6. Shaded area represents potential planting zone in the SE Region—USDA Hardiness Zones 7B–11A; 11B within planting zone but not pictured on map.
Credit: This map is based on the 2023 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map. Visit https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/ for specific zone information.

Planting month for zone 7: Jun

Planting month for zone 8: May

Planting month for zone 9: Apr

Planting month for zones 10 and 11: Mar; Sep; Oct; Nov

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Uses: mass planting; container or above-ground planter; hanging basket; cut flowers; cascading down a wall; border; houseplant

Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

Description

Height: 1 to 2 feet

Spread: 1 to 2 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: ovate

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: not applicable

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: not applicable

Fall characteristic: not applicable

Flower

Flower color: blue; purple; white (certain cultivars)

Flower characteristic: showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: no fruit

Fruit length: no fruit

Fruit cover: no fruit

Fruit color: not applicable

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable

Current year stem/twig color: green

Current year stem/twig thickness: medium

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in partial shade

Soil tolerances: acidic; neutral; clay; sand; loam

Drought tolerance: low

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Plant spacing: 6 to 12 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable

Winter interest: not applicable

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Toxicity: this plant displays toxic characteristics if ingested; causes gastroenteric and other issues

Use and Management

Browallia does best when planted in partial shade locations. The plant may tolerate more sun in northern planting zones but may experience leaf burn when planted in too much sun in southern zones. It is highly adaptable to a variety of soil conditions, but soil should be well drained. It is important to not overwater or fertilize this plant more than necessary, as this will decrease blooming.

This plant generally has a rounded growth form, and light pruning of the new growth helps maintain this plant's bushy appearance. This plant is a short-lived perennial in frost-free areas but will act as an annual in all other planting zones. This plant is suited for a variety of uses in the landscape including in containers and hanging baskets and as a border or mass planting in landscape beds; attracts pollinators and hummingbirds with its tubular-shaped flowers.

Cultivars and hybrids are available that have trailing growth habits, white flowers, compact growth forms, and more. Care should be taken when using this plant in the landscape as it is toxic if ingested.

Propagation is by seed.

Design Considerations

Browallia's mounding or slightly trailing habit makes it a versatile plant in the landscape. Use it as a mass planting in a shady bed to create a sea of blue or white. It also works beautifully as a "spiller" element in container gardens and hanging baskets, cascading over the edges. As a border plant, it can define the edge of a shaded walkway or garden bed.

The flowers are typically a rich amethyst-blue, violet, or pure white. These cool colors can make a shaded garden space feel more serene and visually recede, giving a sense of depth. Use the white variety to brighten up very dark corners. Pair it with other plants that thrive in similar shade and moist, well-drained soil conditions. For foliage contrast, plant it alongside the bold, colorful leaves of Caladiums or the coarse texture of holly ferns.

Pests and Diseases

No pest or disease issues of major concern.

[1] This document is FPS75, one of a series of the Department of Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date October 1999. Revised July 2022 and February 2026. Visit the Ask IFAS website at https://ask.ifas.ufl.edu/ for the currently supported version of this publication. *To learn more about creating and maintaining attractive landscapes that protect Florida's water and natural resources, visit ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/*.

[2] Keighly Graves, horticultural science specialist, Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program; Wendy Wilber, state program coordinator and Extension agent IV, UF/IFAS Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program; Tom Wichman, Extension program manager, Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program, UF/IFAS Center for Land Use Efficiency; Claire Lewis, state specialized agent II and director Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ Program, UF/IFAS Center for Land Use Efficiency; Gail Hansen, professor, sustainable landscape design, Department of Horticultural Sciences; Ryan Klein, assistant professor, arboriculture, School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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