



# ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

## PLANT CARE INFORMATION

### Shrubby Ruellias

*Ruellia californica* and *R. peninsularis*

**DESCRIPTION:** *Ruellia (Ruellia californica)* is an evergreen shrub native to the lower Sonoran desert of Mexico. It is many-branched, with dark green leaves that are hairy on both surfaces. Flowers are purple, funnel shaped and slightly fragrant. Plant will bloom nearly year round in warm climates. It can tolerate light frost but will be disfigured or killed by a hard frost. It's not attractive in winter but can rapidly regrow in spring. Grows to 4 feet tall by as wide. Desert *Ruellia (Ruellia peninsularis)* is a nearly evergreen shrub with a naturally rounded form, growing quickly to 4 feet tall and wide. Its small, glossy green leaves provide a wonderful backdrop for the one-inch-wide blue flowers. The peak bloom period occurs in the spring and early summer, but sporadic flowering can continue throughout the year. If planted in a frost-protected area, Desert *Ruellia* requires almost no maintenance. However, temperatures in mid-20's F will cause damage, requiring some pruning in the early spring. Plant Desert *Ruellia* in full sun to maintain a dense form.

**RECOMMENDED USE:** Can be used as a colorful accent in sun or light shade; lightly clipped, it makes a nice border. Inserted in an enhanced desert landscape or xeriscape it provides a welcome splash of color. Butterflies and hummingbirds go to the nectar-rich flowers.

#### CULTURE:



**Hardiness:** 20°F.



**Sun tolerance:** They will do well in full sun to light shade.



**Watering and feeding:** Water requirements are low once established, but flowers can be forced in the dry fore-summer by giving extra moisture. Fertilizing in spring and summer.



**Soil requirements:** Most soils.



**Pruning:** To shape and remove winter damage.