Town & Country gardens

Bat Face Cuphea

Cuphea llavea 'Bat Face'



Bat Face Cuphea flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 30 inches

Spread: 30 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Description:

Small, freely branching shrub or subshrub with unusual tubular flowers lipped with upward facing petals that look like bat ears and the purple tips resemble the face; great for bedding, shrub borders, and containers in warm climates

Ornamental Features

Bat Face Cuphea has panicles of violet tubular flowers with black overtones and curiously fluted crimson tips at the ends of the branches from mid spring to mid fall, which are interesting on close inspection. Its pointy leaves remain green in color throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

Bat Face Cuphea is a multi-stemmed annual with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Bat Face Cuphea is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

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Planting & Growing

Bat Face Cuphea will grow to be about 30 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. Although it's not a true annual, this plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Bat Face Cuphea is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.