



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## ***Thunbergia grandiflora***<sup>1</sup>

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### **Introduction**

From early summer until late winter this vigorously twining vine bears hanging clusters of large, lavender-blue flowers that are 3 inches in diameter (Fig. 1). These flowers are bell-shaped and have a white throat. The broad, heart-shaped leaves of the Sky Flower are soft and dark green. The fruits are inconspicuous seed capsules.

### **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Thunbergia grandiflora*

**Pronunciation:** thun-BER-jee-uh gran-diff-FLOR-ruh

**Common name(s):** Bengal Clock Vine, Sky Vine

**Family:** *Acanthaceae*

**Plant type:** vine

**USDA hardiness zones:** 9B through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

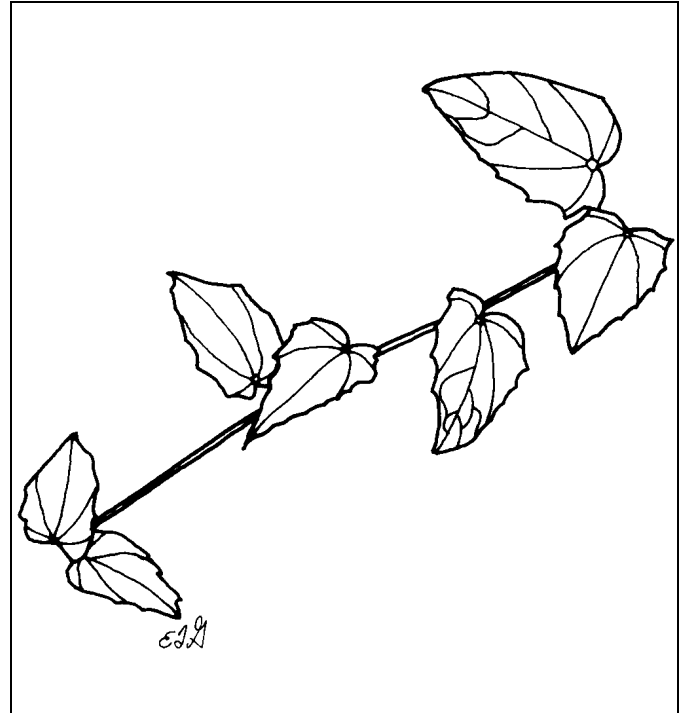
**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** cascading down a wall; container or above-ground planter

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



**Figure 1.** Bengal Clock Vine.

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** medium

#### **Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** undulate

### **Description**

**Height:** depends upon supporting structure

**Spread:** depends upon supporting structure

**Plant habit:** spreading

**Plant density:** moderate

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf shape:** deltoid; saggitate (arrow); ovate  
**Leaf venation:** pinnate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no fall color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** lavender-blue  
**Flower characteristic:** summer flowering; fall flowering; winter flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** unknown  
**Fruit length:** unknown  
**Fruit cover:** unknown  
**Fruit color:** unknown  
**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** typically multi-trunked or clumping stems  
**Current year stem/twig color:** green  
**Current year stem/twig thickness:** thin

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun  
**Soil tolerances:** acidic; alkaline; sand; loam; clay;  
**Drought tolerance:** moderate  
**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown  
**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

**Other**

**Roots:** not applicable  
**Winter interest:** plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers  
**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential:** aggressive, spreading plant

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

## **Use and Management**

Sky Flower has a very rampant growth habit and is great for the quick covering of arbors, trellises and fences. It can be successfully used as a screen or container plant and is marvelous cascading over a wall.

This plant does its best in rich, sterilized top-soil with good drainage. It prefers full sun to partial shade and a generous watering regime. Regular pruning is required to keep this plant in bounds. The nice flowers make it well worth this effort.

Sky Flower is propagated by layers or cuttings.

### **Pests and Diseases**

The root-knot nematode is frequently a pest of Sky Flower.