



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Aster laevis¹

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Introduction

Aster laevis is a sturdy branching perennial that reaches a height of 6 to 18 inches. The grey-silver leaves of Smooth Aster have a fine texture, and light blue daisy-like flowers appear on the plant in the late spring, summer, and fall. The Smooth Aster is not especially showy but has been proven to be reliable.

General Information

Scientific name: *Aster laevis*

Pronunciation: ASS-ter LEE-viss

Common name(s): Aster

Family: *Compositaceae*

Plant type: herbaceous

USDA hardiness zones: 4B through 9A (Fig. 1)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: mass planting; edging; attracts butterflies; cut flowers

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 2 to 3 feet

Spread: 2 to 4 feet

Plant habit: upright

Plant density: symmetrical habit with a regular (or smooth) outline and individuals having more or less identical forms

Growth rate: fast

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: lanceolate

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: lavender

Flower characteristic: summer flowering; fall flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: unknown

Fruit length: unknown

Fruit cover: unknown

Fruit color: white

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

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Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Current year stem/twig color: green
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay;
Drought tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 18 to 24 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

The flowers of Smooth Aster can be cut for flower arrangements, as they last several days indoors. The plant performs well as an edging in the landscape or in a group planting. It makes a nice component in a mixed border.

This perennial requires full sun and a well-drained soil. *Aster laevis* is drought tolerant.

Smooth Aster is propagated by softwood cuttings or by division.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.