Coreopsis laevenworthii

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Introduction

Seven species of Coreopsis are native to the state of Florida (Fig. 1). One species, Coreopsis laevenworthii, has been named Florida’s state flower. Coreopsis are considered perennials as they reappear each year. These colorful plants have bright green leaves that can be either entire or lobed. These plants have single or double flowers that come in a variety of colors: orange, pink, purple, red, and yellow. These lovely flowers are held upright upon tall leafless stems that enable the blooms to be beautifully incorporated into flower arrangements. The flowers are borne in capitula with a small disc, and the ray florets have dentate tips. These 1 1/2- to 2-inch-wide flowers appear in the spring, summer and fall.

General Information

Scientific name: Coreopsis laevenworthii
Pronunciation: kor-ree-OP-sis lev-en-WERTH-ee-eye
Common name(s): Tick-Seed, Coreopsis
Family: Compositae
Plant type: herbaceous; annual
USDA hardiness zones: 4 through 10 (Fig. 2)
Planting month for zone 7: May; Jun
Planting month for zone 8: Apr; May
Planting month for zone 9: Apr; May; Jun; Jul; Aug; Sep
Planting month for zone 10 and 11: Mar; Apr
Origin: native to Florida
Uses: edging; mass planting; attracts butterflies
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 1 to 3 feet
Spread: 1 to 3 feet
Plant habit: upright
Plant density: open
Growth rate: moderate
Texture: fine

Figure 1. Tick-Seed.

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

- **Leaf arrangement**: opposite/subopposite
- **Leaf type**: simple
- **Leaf margin**: lobed
- **Leaf shape**: oblong
- **Leaf venation**: not applicable
- **Leaf type and persistence**: deciduous
- **Leaf blade length**: 2 to 4 inches
- **Leaf color**: green
- **Fall color**: not applicable
- **Fall characteristic**: not applicable

Flower

- **Flower color**: yellow, orange, pink, purple, red
- **Flower characteristic**: spring, summer, fall

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**: thin

Culture

- **Light requirement**: plant grows in full sun
- **Soil tolerances**: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay; occasionally wet
- **Drought tolerance**: high
- **Soil salt tolerances**: unknown
- **Plant spacing**: 6 to 12 inches
Other

**Roots:** not applicable  
**Winter interest:** not applicable  
**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential:** may self-seed each year  
**Pest resistance:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Coreopsis species are generally short-lived and may only last 3 to 4 seasons. Try using these plants as a border or edge. They are also excellent for naturalizing and will reseed themselves. The stalks become long and weak and tend to break in windy or rainy weather. Dwarf varieties may be selected for more polished plants. *C. lanceolata* grows about 15 to 18 inches tall but is not well suited for central and south Florida.

Coreopsis requires a sunny position in the landscape. They prefer well-drained soils that are not too rich; rich soils and overwatering cause these plants to topple over. Keep the soil relatively moist and remove dead flowers immediately to prolong blooming. Taller species of Coreopsis may need support. Place these plants 6 to 12 inches apart in the garden.

*The cultivar ‘Early Sunrise’ flowers sooner than others.*

*Seed is the most common method of propagation for Coreopsis. Division can also be accomplished in the spring or fall.*

Pests and Diseases

Leaf spots, rust, powdery mildew, aphids, leaf beetles, and mites may be occasional problems. Spotted cucumber beetles eat holes in the leaves. Leaf spots may be seen but are usually not serious.