**Introduction**

This dwarf cultivar of *Gardenia jasminoides* is much different from the species (Fig. 1). Trailing Gardenia reaches a height of 2 to 3 feet and can spread 4 to 6 feet. This plant has an open, horizontal branching habit that makes it an attractive ground cover. It will not grow into a shrub as does the species. The small, dark lustrous green leaves generally occur on the stems in 3’s. The leaf veins of this cultivar are not as prominent as the species. The leaves are accompanied by one-inch, white, fragrant flowers in the spring and summer. The fruits of Trailing Gardenia are small, ovate berries that are relatively inconspicuous.

**General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Gardenia jasminoides* ‘Prostrata’  
**Pronunciation:** gar-DEEN-ee-uh jass-min-OY-deez  
**Common name(s):** Dwarf Gardenia  
**Family:** Rubiaceae  
**Plant type:** ground cover  
**USDA hardiness zones:** 8 through 10 (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:** ground cover; container or above-ground planter; mass planting; cascading down a wall  
**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

**Description**

**Height:** 2 to 3 feet  
**Spread:** 3 to 6 feet  
**Plant habit:** spreading; prostrate (flat)  
**Plant density:** dense  
**Growth rate:** moderate  
**Texture:** fine
**Foliage**

- **Leaf arrangement:** whorled
- **Leaf type:** simple
- **Leaf margin:** entire
- **Leaf shape:** ovate
- **Leaf venation:** pinnate
- **Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen
- **Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches
- **Leaf color:** variegated
- **Fall color:** no fall color change
- **Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

- **Flower color:** white
- **Flower characteristic:** pleasant fragrance; spring flowering; summer flowering

**Fruit**

- **Fruit shape:** oval
- **Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches
- **Fruit cover:** fleshy
- **Fruit color:** orange
- **Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

- **Trunk/bark/branches:** usually with one stem/trunk
- **Current year stem/twig color:** green
- **Current year stem/twig thickness:** thin

**Culture**

- **Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun
- **Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; acidic; loam
- **Drought tolerance:** moderate
- **Soil salt tolerances:** poor
- **Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

*Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.*
Other

Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect plant health or aesthetics

Use and Management

This plant is great in planter boxes or pots and makes a lovely border plant. It is also a good mass or facing plant for the front of a shrub border. Trailing Gardenia will also cascade nicely over a wall. It is most commonly used as a ground cover.

Position this plant in an area that receives full sun or partial shade. Trailing Gardenia prefers acid, well-drained soils that are of medium fertility. It is moderately drought tolerant and can be grown throughout Florida. However, this cultivar is not as cold hardy as the species. Plants that are regularly fertilized maintain a dark green color.

Gardenia jasminoides ‘Prostrata’ is commonly propagated by softwood cuttings in June, July, and August. Seeds can also be used to grow this plant.

The cultivar ‘Radicans Variegata’ has white variegations on most leaves. Some nurseries and catalogues refer to ‘Prostrata’ as ‘Radicans’. They can be used interchangeably in landscape applications.

Pests and Diseases

Trailing Gardenia is susceptible to white fly, scale, and aphids and therefore requires some attention to keep it looking nice and healthy. Plants in poorly drained soil often develop yellow leaves and grow poorly.