Creeping Jacob's Ladder

Polemonium reptans

Height: 12 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Spacing: 15 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 2b

Description:

A lovely perennial native wildflower featuring clusters of light blue, bell-shaped flowers on sprawling weak stems in mid to late spring; pinnate leaves resemble a ladder; a great selection for woodland gardens or naturalizing; freely self-seeds



Creeping Jacob's Ladder flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Creeping Jacob's Ladder has masses of beautiful panicles of sky blue bell-shaped flowers at the ends of the stems from mid to late spring, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its ferny pinnately compound leaves remain green in color throughout the season. The burgundy stems are very colorful and add to the overall interest of the plant.



Creeping Jacob's Ladder in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Creeping Jacob's Ladder is an herbaceous perennial with a mounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spreading
- Self-Seeding

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Creeping Jacob's Ladder is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Creeping Jacob's Ladder will grow to be about 12 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 18 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 15 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

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. This plant does not require much in the way of fertilizing once established. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by division.