

WILD PETUNIA

Ruellia caroliniensis

Wild petunia is a long-lived perennial that dies back to the ground each winter. Its leaves emerge in early spring and it quickly reaches its mature height of about 12-18 inches by late April - early May. The leaves are ovate and opposite on the stem. Often, many stems arise from the basal portion near the root mass and the plants develop a nice rounded form.

Blooming occurs almost non-stop from late spring to late summer/early fall. The trumpet-shaped flowers are about 1 inch across and vary in color from nearly white to a deep purple. Often, they occur in pairs and they remain open for only one day. I have found that butterflies relish the nectar from these flowers; in some of my gardens, they have been the top choice among nectar plants.

