**FPS 005** 



# Acalypha pendula<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman<sup>2</sup>

# Introduction

This ground-hugging, fine-textured relative of the more common chenille plant grows no more than several inches tall. In the full sun it forms a thick canopy of tiny, serrated leaves no more than 3/4 inches long by 1/2 inches wide (Figure 1). Bright red, fussy flowers stand erect above the foliage like soldiers in a field.

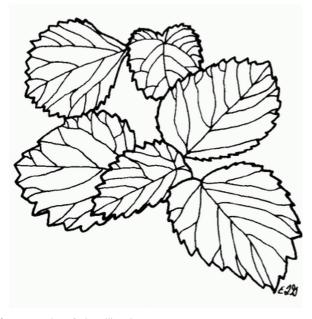


Figure 1. dwarf chenille plant.

# **General Information**

Scientific name: Acalypha pendula

Pronunciation: ack-uh-LIFE-uh PEN-dyoo-luh

Common name(s): dwarf chenille plant

Family: Euphorbiaceae

Plant type: ground cover

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10 through 11 (Figure 2)

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: hanging basket; ground cover; cascading

down a wall

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

# **Description**

**Height:** 0 to 0.5 feet

Spread: depends upon supporting structure

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Plant habit: spreading

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

# **Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: serrate

Leaf shape: ovate

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

**Flower** 

Flower color: red

Flower characteristic: year-round flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: unknown

Fruit length: unknown

Fruit cover: unknown

Fruit color: unknown

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not

showy

#### **Trunk and Branches**

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable

Current year stem/twig color: green

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# Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

# **Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun

**Soil tolerances:** acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

Soil salt tolerance: 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**

Well suited for a hanging basket, dwarf chenille plant will cascade nicely over a wall if planted close to the edge on top of the wall. This plant makes a good ground cover provided people are kept off of it. Like ivy, it tolerates foot traffic poorly. The small stature and slow growth make it a nice addition to a rock garden or other small-scale landscape design.

Dwarf chenille plant performs well in many types of well-drained soils. It grows and flowers best in full sun, with little care other than occasional irrigation needed to maintain the plant once it is established.

#### **Pests and Diseases**

There are no diseases of major concern associated with dwarf chenille plants. Scales, mites and aphids may be troublesome pests in some landscapes, especially when plants are grown in partial shade.