Gardenia jasminoides 'Prostrata' Dwarf Gardenia

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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

Figure 1. Dwarf Gardenia.
Gardenia jasminoides 'Prostrata' Dwarf Gardenia

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

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

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**Gardenia jasminoides 'Prostrata' Dwarf Gardenia**

**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

**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.

**Pest 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.

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