

# Mexican Petunia

*Ruellia simplex*



## What is Mexican petunia?

Mexican petunia is a popular landscaping plant due to its showy purple flowers. It was introduced to Florida from Mexico in the 1940s and has spread into most counties. The Mexican petunia grows up to three feet tall and its seeds disperse long distances by explosive dehiscence. It also spreads rapidly through underground stems and rhizomes.



## Why should we manage it?

Mexican petunia spreads fast and is able to tolerate a wide range of environmental conditions. It can quickly shade out native groundcover and become the only plant in an area. Active prevention of Mexican petunia infestation and early removal of detected plants is key to benefiting the diversity of native plant species in an area.

*Being able to quickly identify an exotic species in an area and eradicate it before it spreads is one of the most efficient actions that we can do to reduce future treatment costs and impacts to native ecosystems.*

## How can you help?

- Plant sterile cultivars or ones proven non-invasive like "Purple Showers" when landscaping or choose native alternatives.
- Learn more about Mexican petunia at this UF/IFAS link and this EDIS publication
- EDDMapS is available to help with species identification and to report invasive sightings!
- Join your local CISMA and follow FISP for updates.
- Attend local plant classes and spread the word about EDRR!
- Sign up for alerts on EDDMapS!

This flyer brought to you by FWC  
Landowner Assistance Program.

