Black-eyed Susan Vine
*Thunbergia alata*

**Plant Description:**

A native to tropical East Africa, this twining vine makes a beautiful addition to container gardens and landscapes with its colorful flowers that appear from late spring through fall. It also provides quick cover for a lattice or chain link fence. Many cultivars and hybrids are available, having yellow, orange, white or pinkish flowers, usually with dark centers. Although a perennial in South Florida, here in North Florida and other areas of the U.S., it is grown as an annual. Plants can be started from seed each year, or grown in containers and protected from the cold during winter.

**Mature Size:** Up to 10 feet tall and wide, depending on variety and growing conditions. Plants grown as annuals may not reach mature size.

**Growth Rate:** Fast

**Plant Habit:** Vining

**Ornamental Characteristics & Uses:**

**Foliage Color:** Medium Green

**Flower Color:** Yellow, Orange, White, Pink

**Bloom Time:** Late Spring – Fall

**Attracts Wildlife:** Not especially attractive to wildlife.

**Uses:** Grown in containers or in the landscape with support structure.
**Growing Requirements:**

**Cold Hardiness Zone(s):** 9b – 11

**Exposure:** Partial Shade – Full Sun

**Water Needs:** Moderate to High

**Soil Tolerances:** Low drought tolerance; prefers well-drained, sandy-loam soils

**Soil pH:** Slightly Acidic to Slightly Alkaline

**Maintenance:** Moderate

**General Care & Growing Tips:**

This plant does not perform well in intense heat, preferring morning sun and afternoon shade. Plant in well-drained soil, enriched with organic matter and maintain a 2- to 3-inch layer of organic mulch to help retain soil moisture. Light applications of a slow-release fertilizer may be beneficial for increased growth and flowering, but over-fertilization should be avoided as this may result in excessive growth with fewer flowers.

**Common Pests:**

Watch for spider mites and whiteflies. No diseases are of major concern.

**What’s in a name?** Don’t confuse Black-eyed Susan Vine (*Thunbergia alata*) with Black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia spp.*), the herbaceous annuals/perennials with daisy-like flowers. When comparing the two plants side-by-side, you should notice that they are quite different, but common names are often confusing which is why each plant is given one unique name, referred to as the scientific name.


**Photo Credit:** Alicia Lamborn