

African Blue Basil

Ocimum kilimandscharicum x basilicum

African blue basil is a sterile hybrid of an East African camphor basil and a standard garden variety called 'Dark Opal'. The amount of pollinator activity on this selection makes it a benefit to any garden. African blue basil is alive with pollinators when in bloom. Although edible, African blue basil has a bit of camphor flavor from one of its parents that some may not care for. This plant is more heat tolerant than other basil. Because it does not produce seed, African blue basil does not need to be pinched back in order to keep the plant growing like other basil. The plant can be easily grown as an annual down to zone 5.

Type: tender perennial herb

USDA hardiness zones: 10 through 11

Uses: border; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; naturalizing; accent

Origin: not native to Florida

Height: 1 to 3 feet **Spread:** 1 to 3 feet

Plant spacing: 24 to 36 inches

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun to part shade

Soil tolerances: slightly acid to slightly alkaline; clay; sand; loam

Drought tolerance: low

Soil salt tolerances: low

Invasive potential: low

Pest resistance: no serious pests or diseases

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Photo: Beth Bolles, UF/IFAS Extension, Escambia County