

## ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE

Environmental Horticulture #EH425



### SPIDERWORT PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

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#### INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Spiderwort
- Scientific name: *Tradescantia x andersoniana*
- Erect, clump-forming herbaceous perennials with grass-like leaves
- Grows 1-2' tall and spreads over a slightly smaller area
- Three-petaled flowers are about 1" across
- Flowers are most often blue but can be white, pink, or purple
- Flowers open in the morning and close by midday
- Blooming period lasts 6-8 weeks
- Hardy in zones 5-9

#### GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Grows best in partial shade

- Prefers moist, fertile media; do not allow media to dry completely
- Avoid fertilizer enriched soils

#### PROPAGATION

- Typically propagated by division in spring or fall
- Can be grown from seed, but cultivars usually do not come true
- Can be propagated from stem cuttings; take cuttings prior to full flower

#### DISORDERS

- Root rot (*Pythium sp.*)
  - Rapid black rot of primary roots occurs
  - Plant may wilt and die
  - Improve drainage

- Remove infected plants
- Tan leaf spot (*Curvularia eragrostidis*)
  - Small, sunken green areas enlarge and become tan in color
  - Remove infected foliage
- Tradescantia mosaic virus
  - Mosaic pattern appears on leaves
  - Remove infected plants to prevent spread of disease

### CONSUMER CARE

- Useful in beds and borders due to an extended blooming period
- Performs well in shady areas where other perennials may not bloom
- Cut plants close to the ground in midsummer after they finish blooming
- New shoots will form and a second blooming period will begin in autumn

### CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Tradescantia x andersoniana*
  - ‘Bilberry Ice’: bicolor white and lavender flowers
  - ‘Blue Stone’: deep blue flowers
  - ‘Concord Grape’: purple flowers, blue-gray foliage
  - ‘Red Grape’: red-violet flowers, gray-green foliage
  - ‘Snowcap’: large white flowers, deep green foliage
  - ‘Sweet Kate’: deep blue flowers, brilliant golden foliage

### References

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tradescantia>
- [http://www.floridata.com/ref/T/trad\\_and\\_cfm](http://www.floridata.com/ref/T/trad_and_cfm)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_foliage\\_plant\\_diseases\\_\(Commelinaceae\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_foliage_plant_diseases_(Commelinaceae))