

Tennessee Coneflower

Echinacea tennesseensis

Plant Type: Native Perennial Wildflower

Sun Exposure: Full Sun, Part Sun

Season of Interest: Summer, Fall

Bloom Time: Summer, Fall

Bloom Color: Pink to Lavender

Height: 36 to 42 in.

Spread: 24 in.

Spacing: 28 in.

Water Needs: Average

Maintenance: Very Little

Soil Type: Clay, Loam, Sandy

Soil pH: Acidic, Neutral

Soil Drainage: Well Drained

Pests: Deer and Rabbit resistant

Diseases: Leaf spot, Aster yellows

Wildlife: Bees, Butterflies, Birds



Description: The Tennessee purple coneflower is a true Tennessee treasure. It was first discovered by botanists in 1878 within the cedar glades of the Central Basin of Tennessee and it is found nowhere else. It is exceedingly rare. By the mid twentieth century, few traces of this endemic species remained. In 1979 it was the first plant from Tennessee to be placed on the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Plants. In 2011, after thirty years of hard work, it was officially delisted from the federal list.



This beautiful Echinacea species is unique in its appearance, as its ray-like flowers have petals that tend to stand upright, making it easy to identify among other coneflowers. In the garden, this plant will typically grow to around two to three feet in height, blooms heavily from June until September in much of the state, and prefers full sun. It does best when planted in well-drained soil. Plant them in the spot of your garden with the poorest soil, and you will be rewarded for it! They require little care in the garden due to their superb drought tolerance, and they are virtually pest-free. For more information see: plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/echinacea-tennesseensis

Care Tips: To get the most blooms (and the sturdiest plants), plant your coneflowers in a spot that gets at least six to eight hours of full sunlight each day. The plants will tolerate partial shade, but may eventually flop over, and the blooms won't be as prolific. Coneflowers grow best in a garden that with a neutral soil pH. They can thrive in a variety of soil types, including sandy, rocky, and clay soils. However, they do not like wet soil. As a native plant, Tennessee coneflower thrives in hot, dry climates but can handle a range of temperature and humidity fluctuations. Adding compost each spring usually gives them the nutrition they need for healthy foliage and blooms. Pruning coneflowers is helpful, but not necessary. You can leave the plants standing throughout the winter months to feed the birds. That being said, deadheading is the primary maintenance for coneflowers and will keep them in bloom all summer.