

False Roselle Hibiscus

AKA: Red-leaf, African Rose Mallow Hibiscus

(Hibiscus acetosella)



Your plants have been through a hard trip and need a little TLC to get going again. I suggest planting in 1 gallon pots and keeping in a **shady location** and well watered for about a week or two or until the aren't wilted any longer. Be sure to use well draining potting mix; don't allow the soil to remain soggy, just slightly damp. Plant so top of roots are well covered, planting a little deep is better than too shallow. When they have recovered, you may plant in full sun or part shade; may even be planted in full shade, but they don't get the dark

burgundy color on the leaves in full shade.

When your plants have recovered and are ready to be planted out: dig hole in desired spot in full sun or part shade. Place plant in hole so that top of root ball is level with the surrounding soil or slightly deeper. Fill in hole with soil and firm plant in. Water well and apply your favorite fertilizer according to package directions during the summer growing season.

Water regularly in dry conditions at least until plants are established, after that these plants can stand quite dry conditions but will grow and bloom better with regular water.

Foliage will be darker purple in full sun than in shade, but will grow and bloom in either location. These bloom in the fall with lovely light pink blooms that are a beautiful contrast to the dark foliage.

Keep tops and ends of each branch trimmed to promote more bushing and more flowers. When the plant is about 2-3 feet tall, you should start trimming the top to make it bush out, then trim the ends of each new branch as they reach 2' – 3' long to make them send out more branches; more branches produce more flowers. Stop pruning these plants in late summer or early fall as the first flowers form at the tips of the branches. The exact time to stop pruning depends on your zone; they will bloom earlier in cooler zones. In zone 9/Florida, these begin blooming in mid October and continue until frost so I stop pruning in September. In cooler – more northern zones these may begin blooming in September, so stop pruning in August or whenever you see bloom buds starting to form on the ends of the branches.

Plant will produce seeds (which the Cardinals LOVE, by the way!) and self-seed itself for new plants next year. These are a perennial in zones 8-11; a self-sowing annual in other zones.