

Turk's Cap

Family – Malvaceae (Mallow Family)

Genus/Species – Malvaviscus drummondii

Pronunciation – mal-vuh-VISK-us druh-MUN-dee-eye

Common Names – Red Mallow, Drummond wax-mallow, Manzanilla



Photo by Genie Lindberg

Plant Type – Perennial

Height – 2 ½ to 9 feet tall

Width – 4 foot spread

Soil Type – Sand, loam, clay, limestone if moist and well drained

Light – Part sun to dappled shade

Dormant – In winter

Moisture –Low, moist, dry, semi-arid

Growth – Slow to fast growing

Bloom –May to frost

Colors – Vermillion red

Form – Upright or sometimes reclining stems

Pollination Source – Bee, butterfly, airborne

Additional Description – It is evergreen, and blooms all year in places where frost is a rarity.

Drought tolerant

Fruits are marble-sized red cherries or apples.



Photo by Genie Lindberg

Leaves/Petal – Heart-shaped alternate leaves with 3 shallow lobes. 2 -5 inches long. Coarse hair on top of leaf and velvety underneath. The margins have shallow, rounded teeth.

The ¾ - 1 inch pendant, hibiscus-like flowers grow singly in the leaf axils or in clusters at the end of the stem. The petals remain closely wrapped around one another at the base but spread somewhat toward the end. The stamens extend considerably beyond the petals.

Maintenance – Cut back old stalks after a frost

Propagation—Softwood cuttings, seeds, division of clumps also self-layering

Wildlife value – It is a nectar source for butterflies and hummingbirds. Its fruits are eaten by birds and animals.

Deer Browse

Diseases – Mildew

Pests – None known

Additional Information - Turk's cap gets its name from its resemblance to a Turkish fez.

Named for naturalist Thomas Drummond whose collections were the first made in Texas that were extensively distributed among the museums and scientific institutions of the world.

Designated a Texas Superstar in 2011.

The fruit is edible either raw or cooked, tasting rather like apple, hence its Spanish name, Manzanilla (Little Apple).

Its leaves have been used as an emollient and in Mexico. The flowers are used in a decoction to treat inflammation of the digestive tract and as a menstrual aid.

USDA Native Status: Native to U.S. and Native to Texas



Photo by Genie Lindberg