Government Red Scarlet Firethorn

Pyracantha coccinea 'Government Red'



Government Red Scarlet Firethorn flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 6 feet

Spread: 8 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Other Names: Government Red Pyracantha

Description:

A broadleaf evergreen member of the rose family coveted for its bright tomato-red fruit in fall lasting through winter, very showy, also bears smallish white flowers in spring; needs full sun and well-drained soil, can be susceptible to fireblight

Ornamental Features

Government Red Scarlet Firethorn is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. The tomato-orange fruits are held in abundance in spectacular clusters from early to late fall. It features showy clusters of white flowers held atop the branches in late spring. It has dark green evergreen foliage. The glossy oval leaves turn coppery-bronze in the fall, which persists throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Government Red Scarlet Firethorn is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Disease
- Spiny

Government Red Scarlet Firethorn is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Topiary

Planting & Growing

Government Red Scarlet Firethorn will grow to be about 6 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 8 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under average home landscape conditions. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for acidic soils, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.