Reindeer Moss

Cladina rangiferina



Reindeer Moss
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 3 inches

Spread: 12 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 1

Other Names: syn. Cladonia rangiferina, Caribou Lichen

Description:

This illuminating groundcover ranges in color from white to grey-green; a boreal forest native, it thrives in poor, rocky soil; a great basing for containers or as an accent in rock gardens

Ornamental Features

Reindeer Moss' attractive tiny threadlike leaves remain gray in color with showy white variegation and tinges of bluish-green throughout the season on a plant with a spreading habit of growth.

Landscape Attributes

Reindeer Moss is a dense herbaceous perennial with a ground-hugging habit of growth. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Reindeer Moss is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Reindeer Moss will grow to be only 3 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 12 inches. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant does best in partial shade to full shade. Keep it well away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in poor soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by division.

Reindeer Moss is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its spreading habit of growth, it is ideally suited for use as a 'spiller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the edges where it can spill gracefully over the pot. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.