Sea Kale

Crambe maritima



Sea Kale in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Sea Kale flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Sea Cabbage, Sea Colwort

Description:

A striking plant with large blue-green leaves that are deeply lobed and crinkled; clusters of tiny white flowers above the foliage in early to mid-summer; great for a large border; not easily divided but seedlings may appear at base

Ornamental Features

Sea Kale is bathed in stunning racemes of lightly-scented white star-shaped flowers held atop the stems from early to mid summer. Its crinkled lobed leaves emerge burgundy in spring, turning bluish-green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Sea Kale is an herbaceous perennial with a mounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other garden plants with finer foliage.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Sea Kale is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Sea Kale
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Sea Kale will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 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 full sun to partial shade. 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 type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. This species is not originally from North America.

Sea Kale is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It can be used either as 'filler' or as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, depending on the height and form of the other plants used in the container planting. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.