Hairy Stemmed Rhipsalis

Rhipsalis pilocarpa



Hairy Stemmed Rhipsalis foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 16 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Hairy-fruited Wickerware Cactus

Description:

This cactus variety is initially upright but cascades as it matures; green stems are covered in wooly white hairs; fragrant flowers appear in fall and are followed by deep red fruits; a great container or basket plant that will thrive indoors

Ornamental Features

Hairy Stemmed Rhipsalis is an atypical member of the cactus family known as an 'epiphyte' or 'air plant', which means that it doesn't necessarily require a growing medium for its roots. Like all other cacti, it doesn't actually have leaves, but rather modified succulent stems that comprise the bulk of the plant. This particular variety of cactus is valued for its distinctively arching form on a plant consisting of This plant features showy fragrant white star-shaped flowers with pink eyes at the ends of the stems from mid fall to early winter. It features an abundance of magnificent burgundy berries from late winter to mid spring.

Landscape Attributes

Hairy Stemmed Rhipsalis is a small succulent evergreen plant with a decidedly arching habit of growth. As a type of cactus, it has no true foliage; the body of the plant is wholly comprised of a linked series of hairy forest green fine thread-like segments which are connected together to form the branches of the plant.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. Stray segments or shoots can be removed or thinned to control the overall form and spread of the plant. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spiny

Hairy Stemmed Rhipsalis is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

Planting & Growing

Hairy Stemmed Rhipsalis will grow to be about 16 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. It tends to remain low and full right to the ground. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

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. Unlike most cacti, which are known for their strong preference for hot, dry growing environments, this plant is native to tropical climates and grows in areas with more humidity and rainfall than most cacti. 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. Like most succulents and cacti, this plant prefers to grow in poor soils and should therefore never be fertilized. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by cuttings.

Hairy Stemmed Rhipsalis is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers and foliage against which the thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.