Lion's Ear

Leonotis nepetifolia

Plant Height: 6 feet

Flower Height: 8 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Klip Dagga, Devil's Pincushion, Lion's Tail

Description:

This variety is a very interesting member of the mint family presenting gorgeous whorls of orange tubular blooms rising high in late summer or early fall; prefers sun and light shade



Lion's Ear flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Lion's Ear features showy clusters of orange tubular flowers rising above the foliage from late summer to early fall. Its narrow leaves remain green in color throughout the season.



Lion's Ear foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Lion's Ear is an herbaceous perennial with a rigidly upright and towering form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spreading

Lion's Ear is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Vertical Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Herb Gardens
- Container Planting



Lion's Ear in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Lion's Ear will grow to be about 6 feet tall at maturity extending to 8 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 3 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 pH, but grows best in rich soils. 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.

Lion's Ear is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. 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.