Pig's Ear

Cotyledon orbiculata 'Macrantha'



Pig's Ear
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 24 inches

Flower Height: 3 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Paddle Plant, Round-leaved Naval Wort

Description:

A shrubby succulent with a short, stout trunk and many branches holding rounded, pale green leaves edged in red; coral flowers in late winter rise up on stiff stalks; will tolerate light shade; an excellent container plant



Pig's Ear flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Pig's Ear features showy spikes of coral-pink bell-shaped flowers with yellow eyes rising above the foliage from late winter to mid spring. It has attractive light green foliage edged in dark red. The succulent round leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color.

Landscape Attributes

Pig's Ear is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. 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 is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. It has no significant negative characteristics.

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

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

Planting & Growing

Pig's Ear will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity extending to 3 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. It has a low canopy. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This shrub should only be grown in full sunlight. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Pig's Ear makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use 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 grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.