Flame Acanthus

Anisacanthus quadrifidus 'var. wrightii'

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Desert Honeysuckle, Mexican Flame, A. wrightii

Description:

A beautiful native shrub of south central Texas, producing vivid red-orange tubular flowers from late spring to fall; very adaptable and drought tolerant; great for heavy soils or growing in containers; a fine landscape specimen plant



Flame Acanthus flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Flame Acanthus features showy red tubular flowers at the ends of the branches from late spring to mid fall. It has green deciduous foliage. The pointy leaves do not develop any appreciable fall color.



Flame Acanthus flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Flame Acanthus is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a mounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies and hummingbirds 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;

- Self-Seeding

Flame Acanthus is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Flame Acanthus will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It has a low canopy, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

This shrub should only be grown in full sunlight. It prefers to grow in average to dry locations, and dislikes excessive moisture. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selection of a native North American species.; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Flame Acanthus makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used 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.