Merle's Ruby Crested Iris

Iris cristata 'Merle's Ruby'



Merle's Ruby Crested Iris in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 6 inches

Flower Height: 8 inches

Spread: 8 inches

Spacing: 7 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 3

Ornamental Features

Merle's Ruby Crested Iris has masses of beautiful lilac purple flag-like flowers with a coppery-bronze beard at the ends of the stems in mid spring, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its sword-like leaves remain green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Merle's Ruby Crested Iris is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spreading
- Insects

Merle's Ruby Crested Iris is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Merle's Ruby Crested Iris will grow to be only 6 inches tall at maturity extending to 8 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 8 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 7 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. It grows at a medium 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 requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth, but will die in 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. This is a selection of a native North American species. 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.