Candy Corn Plant

Cuphea micropetala

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: syn. Cuphea melvilla

Description:

A fast growing, evergreen shrub with unusual tubular flowers that emerge yellow and then develop red coloring at the bases, resembling candy corn; flowers from late summer to late fall; a great garden accent or container plant

Ornamental Features

Candy Corn Plant has racemes of yellow tubular flowers with red overtones at the ends of the branches from late summer to late fall, which are interesting on close inspection. Its glossy pointy leaves emerge light green in spring, turning dark green in color with distinctive creamy white veins and tinges of red the rest of the year. The crimson stems are very colorful and add to the overall interest of the plant.

Landscape Attributes

Candy Corn Plant is an open multi-stemmed annual with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Candy Corn Plant is recommended for the following landscape applications;



Candy Corn Plant flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Candy Corn Plant in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Candy Corn Plant flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Candy Corn Plant will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. Although it's not a true annual, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

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. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.

Candy Corn Plant 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.