Bird of Paradise Shrub

Caesalpinia gilliesii



Bird of Paradise Shrub flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 6 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Desert Bird of Paradise, syn. Poinciana gilliesii

Description:

This interesting shrub produces spectacular upright racemes of luminous yellow and red blooms that are long lasting; graceful foliage creates a wonderful texture; perfect for patio containers, or near walkways



Bird of Paradise Shrub flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Bird of Paradise Shrub features showy racemes of yellow flowers with red anthers rising above the foliage from early to mid summer, which emerge from distinctive chartreuse flower buds. It has attractive bluish-green evergreen foliage which emerges light green in spring. The tiny oval bipinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain bluish-green throughout the winter. The fruits are showy tan pods displayed from early fall to early winter.

Landscape Attributes

Bird of Paradise Shrub is an open multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. It lends an extremely fine and delicate texture to the landscape composition which can make it a great accent feature on this basis alone.

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 bees, 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;

- Invasive

Bird of Paradise Shrub is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Bird of Paradise Shrub will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 6 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, 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 dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. 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 somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America.

Bird of Paradise Shrub makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base 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.