Mexican Holdback

Erythrostemon mexicanus



Mexican Holdback flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 8 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Mexican Caesalpinia, form. Caesalpinia mexicanus

Description:

This attractive shrub or small tree 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; very heat tolerant

Ornamental Features

Mexican Holdback has attractive dark green evergreen foliage which emerges light green in spring on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth. The small oval bipinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. The fruits are showy tan pods displayed from early fall to early winter.

Landscape Attributes

Mexican Holdback 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spiny

Mexican Holdback is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Mexican Holdback will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 8 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 20 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under average home landscape conditions. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for sandy, alkaline soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of 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..

Mexican Holdback 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.