Texas Mountain Laurel

Sophora secundiflora



Texas Mountain Laurel
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 7

Other Names: Mescal Bean, syn. Dermatophyllum secundiflorum

Description:

An evergreen, very drought tolerant large shrub or small tree with thick, oval, waxy leaves; extremely fragrant purple, pea like flowers appear in large clusters in early spring, followed by tan pods; great for water-wise landscapes

Ornamental Features

Texas Mountain Laurel features showy clusters of fragrant violet pea-like flowers with lavender overtones at the ends of the branches in early spring. It has attractive dark green evergreen foliage. The glossy oval compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. The fruits are showy tan pods with a creamy white blush, which are carried in abundance from late spring to mid summer. The furrowed gray bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.



Texas Mountain Laurel foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Texas Mountain Laurel is a dense multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Texas Mountain Laurel is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Texas Mountain Laurel will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 3 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 80 years or more.

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 pH, but grows best in poor soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from 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..

Texas Mountain Laurel 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.