Madagascan Ocotillo

Alluaudia procera

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 8

Description:

A striking shrub; vertically upright gray stems are woody and thorny, with bright green oval leaves in lines along the stems; blooms infrequently with clusters of white flowers; it really stands out in the garden or borders; also great for rock gardens

Ornamental Features

Madagascan Ocotillo is primarily valued in the landscape for its rigidly columnar form. It features subtle clusters of buttery yellow flowers held atop the branches from early summer to late fall. It has attractive light green deciduous foliage. The small succulent oval leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color. The spiny bark and gray branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Madagascan Ocotillo is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a narrowly upright and columnar growth habit. Its strikingly bold and coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced landscape composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spiny



Madagascan Ocotillo
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Madagascan Ocotillo foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Madagascan Ocotillo is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Vertical Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Madagascan Ocotillo
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Madagascan Ocotillo will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 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 slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 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 sandy soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by cuttings.

Madagascan Ocotillo 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.