Finger Aloe

Cotyledon orbiculata var. oblonga

Plant Height: 18 inches

Flower Height: 3 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Grey Sticks

Description:

An attractive succulent with long, grayish-white finger-like leaves forming a low shrub or groundcover; clusters of orange bells dangle from stiff stalks above the foliage in spring; will tolerate light shade; an excellent garden accent or container plant

Ornamental Features

Finger Aloe features showy clusters of peach bell-shaped flowers with buttery yellow eyes rising above the foliage from early spring to early summer. It has attractive red-tipped grayish green foliage with hints of white which emerges olive green in spring. The succulent round leaves are highly ornamental and remain grayish green throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Finger Aloe is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. It has no significant negative characteristics.



Finger Aloe flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Finger Aloe flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Finger Aloe is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Container Planting



Finger Aloe
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Finger Aloe will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity extending to 3 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 4 feet. It has a low canopy. It grows at a slow 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 growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. 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, 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. It can be propagated by division.

Finger Aloe makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use 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. 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.