Airplane Plant

Crassula perfoliata var. falcata

Plant Height: 18 inches

Flower Height: 24 inches

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Rochea falcata, Propeller Plant, Crassula falcata

Description:

A low-rising variety with attractive, narrow gray-green foliage arranged in overlapping pairs; very drought-tolerant and does well in poor soils; clusters of stunning red flowers in summer; an excellent choice for containers and rock gardens



Airplane Plant
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Airplane Plant features showy corymbs of red star-shaped flowers with yellow eyes rising above the foliage in mid summer, which emerge from distinctive creamy white flower buds. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its attractive succulent narrow leaves remain grayish green in color throughout the year.



Airplane Plant in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Airplane Plant is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant. Trim off the flower heads after they fade and die to encourage more blooms late into the season. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Airplane Plant is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Airplane Plant will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity extending to 24 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 15 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. 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 a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in poor soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. 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. It can be propagated by division.

Airplane Plant is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting 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 growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.