Tower of Jewels

Echium wildpretii



Tower of Jewels in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 24 inches

Flower Height: 6 feet

Spread: 30 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Red Bugloss

Description:

A short-lived perennial with attractive silvery gray-green leaves covered in smooth hairs, and held in rosettes; after 2 to 3 years a stout unbranched spike rises up to 6 feet, densely covered with coral-red flowers; dies after flowering, but self-seeds

Ornamental Features

Tower of Jewels has masses of beautiful spikes of fragrant coral-pink trumpet-shaped flowers with red throats rising above the foliage from early to late spring, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its attractive large tomentose narrow leaves remain grayish green in color with hints of silver throughout the year.



Tower of Jewels flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Tower of Jewels is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with tall flower stalks held atop a low mound of foliage. 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 plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It is a good choice for attracting bees and hummingbirds to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Tower of Jewels is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Tower of Jewels will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity extending to 6 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 30 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 3 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 is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America..

Tower of Jewels 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. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.