Giant Gasteria

Gasteria acinacifolia



Giant Gasteria in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 24 inches

Flower Height: 3 feet

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Gasteria candicans, Aloe candicans

Description:

A tough aloe relative featuring dark green leaves covered with tiny raised white dots; thrives well in light shade, and turns dark rusty red in full sun; suckers freely to form colonies; spine-free, so great for dry shady walkways or patio containers



Giant Gasteria
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Giant Gasteria's attractive succulent spiny leaves remain dark green in color with distinctive white spots and tinges of red throughout the year on a plant with a spreading habit of growth.

Landscape Attributes

Giant Gasteria is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with a ground-hugging habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other garden plants with finer foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting birds and hummingbirds to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Suckering
- Self-Seeding

Giant Gasteria is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Giant Gasteria will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity extending to 3 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 24 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant performs well in both full sun and full 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 sandy soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Giant Gasteria is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its spreading habit of growth, it is ideally suited for use as a 'spiller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the edges where it can spill gracefully over the pot. 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.