Mexican Horncone

Ceratozamia mexicana

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 10

Description:

An attractive, medium sized cycad with a trunk up to 2 feet, and long, dark green leaves forming a graceful crown around a spiny cone; an attractive accent or container plant; must be well drained and prefers slightly acidic soil

Ornamental Features

Mexican Horncone's attractive large narrow pinnately compound leaves emerge coppery-bronze in spring, turning bluish-green in color with hints of powder blue the rest of the year on a plant with an arching habit of growth. The dark brown fruits with white spines are held in cones from mid to early winter.

Landscape Attributes

Mexican Horncone is a spreading evergreen perennial with a shapely form and gracefully arching foliage. 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 should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. 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

Mexican Horncone is recommended for the following landscape applications;



Mexican Horncone
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Mexican Horncone in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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



Mexican Horncone
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Mexican Horncone will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 70 years or more. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant does best in partial shade to full shade. Keep it well away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. 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 quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided. 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.

Mexican Horncone is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used 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.