Spice Bush

Calycanthus occidentalis



Spice Bush flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 12 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 6

Other Names: California Allspice, Western Sweetshrub, Spicebush

Description:

A large rounded shrub with a sweet spicy fragrance emanating from interesting, magnolia-like, dark red flowers; plant along a walkway or driveway where the flower fragrance can be enjoyed by passers-by; blooms on new and old wood



Spice Bush
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Spice Bush features showy fragrant semi-double dark red star-shaped flowers with burgundy overtones at the ends of the branches from mid spring to late summer. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The glossy oval leaves turn an outstanding yellow in the fall.

Landscape Attributes

Spice Bush is a dense multi-stemmed deciduous 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 is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Spice Bush is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Windbreaks and Shelterbelts
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Spice Bush will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 12 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium 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 prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America.