Orchid Primrose

Primula vialii

Plant Height: 10 inches

Flower Height: 18 inches

Spread: 12 inches

Spacing: 9 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Vial's Primrose, Red-hot Poker Primrose

Description:

This unusual variety features stunning spires of tiny pinkish-purple flowers that are bright red when in bud, above bright, light green foliage for wonderful contrast; creates a spectacular effect when planted in groups; thrives in damp, shady areas



Orchid Primrose flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Orchid Primrose flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Orchid Primrose has masses of beautiful spikes of lilac purple star-shaped flowers with purple overtones rising above the foliage from early to mid summer, which emerge from distinctive scarlet flower buds, and which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its crinkled narrow leaves remain light green in color throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

Orchid Primrose is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with tall flower stalks held atop a low mound of foliage. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. 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.

Orchid Primrose is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting
- Bog Gardens

Planting & Growing

Orchid Primrose will grow to be about 10 inches tall at maturity extending to 18 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 12 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 9 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. 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 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 prefers to grow in moist to wet soil, and will even tolerate some standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in both summer and winter to conserve soil moisture and protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America..

Orchid Primrose is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers against which the larger thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.