Natal Bottlebrush

Greyia sutherlandii



Natal Bottlebrush flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 12 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: South African Bottlebrush

Description:

A rugged looking, semi-deciduous shrub or small tree featuring attractive round leaves and masses of stunning, brilliant scarlet flowers nearly year-round; the leaves turn red in fall; thrives in rocky soils and must be well drained

Ornamental Features

Natal Bottlebrush features showy clusters of scarlet pincushion flowers at the ends of the branches from late fall to mid fall. The flowers are excellent for cutting. It has attractive bluish-green deciduous foliage. The large serrated round leaves are highly ornamental and turn an outstanding red in the fall. The rough gray bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Natal Bottlebrush is an open multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting bees, butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Natal Bottlebrush is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Natal Bottlebrush 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 40 years or more.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial 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 xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. This plant should not require much in the way of fertilizing once established, although it may appreciate a shot of general-purpose fertilizer from time to time early in the growing season. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America..

Natal Bottlebrush makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use 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 grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.