Sonoran False Prairie-clover

Marina orcuttii

Plant Height: 2 inches

Flower Height: 3 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 18 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Orcutt's Indigo-bush



Sonoran False Prairie-clover flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Sonoran False Prairie-clover in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Description:

A California native perennial herb that emerges from a woody taproot and creates an airy, low mat of tiny pubescent compound green leaves; violet-purple flowers rise up from spring to fall; heat and drought tolerant, an excellent water-wise groundcover

Ornamental Features

Sonoran False Prairie-clover features dainty clusters of violet pea-like flowers with purple overtones and gold anthers at the ends of the stems from mid spring to mid fall. Its attractive tiny tomentose oval compound leaves emerge pink in spring, turning bluish-green in color with distinctive gray edges and tinges of silver the rest of the year. The brick red stems can be quite attractive.

Landscape Attributes

Sonoran False Prairie-clover is an open herbaceous evergreen perennial with a ground-hugging habit of growth. 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 is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting bees and butterflies to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Sonoran False Prairie-clover is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Sonoran False Prairie-clover will grow to be only 2 inches tall at maturity extending to 3 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 24 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 18 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant 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 a low-water garden or xeriscape application. 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 pH, but grows best in sandy soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America..

Sonoran False Prairie-clover 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. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.