Scorpion's Tail

Heliotropium angiospermum



Scorpion's Tail flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 30 inches

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Scorpion Tail, Sore Bush, Rooster Comb

Description:

Interesting clusters of white flowers with yellow throats on coiled terminal spikes, over deeply veined, dark green leaves; upright to sprawling habit; good in borders, beds and containers; deadhead to encourage new blooms and control self-seeding



Scorpion's Tail
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Scorpion's Tail has masses of beautiful clusters of fragrant white flowers with yellow eyes at the ends of the stems from early winter to late fall, which are most effective when planted in groupings. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its textured pointy leaves remain dark green in color throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

Scorpion's Tail is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep. Trim off the flower heads after they fade and die to encourage more blooms late into the season. 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Scorpion's Tail is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Scorpion's Tail will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 24 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 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 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. 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, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of 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.

Scorpion's Tail is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use 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.