Onyx™ Peacock Hydrangea

Hydrangea macrophylla 'Zulu'



Onyx Peacock Hydrangea flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight: ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5

Other Names: French Hydrangea, Bigleaf Hydrangea

Group/Class: Onyx Series

Description:

A very showy summer-blooming garden shrub featuring large, long lasting blue and purple mophead flowers on sturdy black stems; blooms from early to late summer on old and new wood so protection of flower buds in winter may be necessary

Ornamental Features

Onyx Peacock Hydrangea features bold balls of blue flowers with purple overtones and buttery yellow centers at the ends of the branches from early to late summer. The flowers are excellent for cutting. It has dark green foliage with light green undersides and tinges of bluish-green. The serrated pointy leaves do not develop any appreciable fall color. The smooth tan bark and black branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Onyx Peacock Hydrangea is a 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 shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Onyx Peacock Hydrangea is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Onyx Peacock Hydrangea will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This shrub does best in a location that gets morning sunlight but is shaded from the hot afternoon sun, although it will also grow in partial shade. Keep it 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 requires an evenly moist well-drained soil for optimal growth. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. To help this plant achive its best flowering performance, periodically apply a flower-boosting fertilizer from early spring through into the active growing season. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments, 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 is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Onyx Peacock Hydrangea 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.