California Sunlight Begonia

Begonia boliviensis 'California Sunlight'



California Sunlight Begonia flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 12 inches

Flower Height: 16 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Spacing: 16 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Description:

A stunning choice for hanging baskets and patio containers; semi-upright and bushy plants produce slender, green foliage contrasting with nodding, orange blooms on scarlet red stems; thrives in sun or shade; rain tolerant; easy to grow

Ornamental Features

California Sunlight Begonia features dainty nodding orange bell-shaped flowers at the ends of the stems from mid spring to mid fall. Its attractive serrated narrow leaves remain green in color throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

California Sunlight Begonia is an herbaceous annual with a trailing habit of growth, eventually spilling over the edges of hanging baskets and containers. 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 is a high maintenance plant that will require regular care and upkeep, and usually looks its best without pruning, although it will tolerate pruning. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects
- Disease

California Sunlight Begonia is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

Planting & Growing

California Sunlight Begonia will grow to be about 12 inches tall at maturity extending to 16 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 18 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 16 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. Although it's not a true annual, this plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in a location that gets morning sunlight but is shaded from the hot afternoon sun, although it will also grow in full 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, but will die in standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. 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 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 over the growing season to conserve soil moisture. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America. It can be propagated by cuttings; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

California Sunlight Begonia is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. Because of its trailing 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.