Gum Rockrose

Cistus ladanifer

Height: 5 feet

Spread: 5 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 7

Other Names: Crimson-Spot Rockrose, Rock Rose

Description:

Clusters of pure white flowers with contrasting crimson spots cover the glossy, dark green foliage in late spring; a great groundcover or rock garden plant; tolerant of poor, dry soils, hot garden locations and salt spray



Gum Rockrose flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Gum Rockrose is clothed in stunning white round flowers with gold eyes and crimson spots at the ends of the branches from late spring to early summer. It has attractive dark green foliage with grayish green undersides. The glossy narrow leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color.



Gum Rockrose flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Gum Rockrose is an open multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a mounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined 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. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Gum Rockrose is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Gum Rockrose will grow to be about 5 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 5 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years.

This shrub should only be grown in full sunlight. 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 does not require much in the way of fertilizing once established. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in poor soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America.

Gum Rockrose 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.