Desert Willow

Chilopsis linearis ssp. arcuata



Desert Willow flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 20 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 6

Description:

A small deciduous tree or large shrub with an open structure and curving branches; long blooming pink flowers in late spring, followed by gracefully weeping pods that persist well into winter; drought tolerant, watering should be deep and infrequent

Ornamental Features

Desert Willow features showy clusters of pink trumpet-shaped flowers with lavender overtones at the ends of the branches in late spring. The fruits are showy creamy white pods which fade to tan over time, which are carried in abundance from mid summer to late winter. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. It has emerald green deciduous foliage. The narrow leaves do not develop any appreciable fall color.

Landscape Attributes

Desert Willow is a multi-stemmed deciduous tree with a shapely form and gracefully arching branches. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting bees and hummingbirds 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

Desert Willow is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- Hedges/Screening

Planting & Growing

Desert Willow will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 20 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 50 years or more.

This tree 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 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 sandy soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by cuttings.