Salt Heliotrope

Heliotropium curassavicum

Height: 18 inches

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Seaside Heliotrope, Quail Plant, Cola de Mico

Description:

A sprawling, multi-stemmed plant with fleshy, narrow, bluish-green leaves; tiny white flowers with yellow-green throats emerge from gradually uncoiling stalks from spring to fall, and turn violet as they age; great for rock gardens and coastal areas



Salt Heliotrope flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Salt Heliotrope features unusual chains of white star-shaped flowers with chartreuse eyes at the ends of the stems from mid spring to mid fall. Its small narrow leaves remain bluish-green in color with hints of gray throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Salt Heliotrope is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This plant 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 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;

- Spreading
- Self-Seeding

Salt Heliotrope is recommended for the following landscape applications;



Salt Heliotrope in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting
- Hanging Baskets

Planting & Growing

Salt Heliotrope will grow to be about 18 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 herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. 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 a low-water garden or xeriscape application. 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, 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.

Salt Heliotrope is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers against which the larger thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.