Marsh Spurge

Euphorbia palustris



Marsh Spurge in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Description:

Shrubby perennial glows in yellow and chartreuse before turing orange-yellow in the fall; adapts to varied soils, deer tend to stay away; milky sap can be a skin irritant to humans

Ornamental Features

Marsh Spurge has masses of beautiful cymes of yellow flowers with chartreuse bracts at the ends of the stems from mid spring to early summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its attractive narrow leaves are chartreuse in color. As an added bonus, the foliage turns a gorgeous orange in the fall.

Landscape Attributes

Marsh Spurge is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with a mounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, 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.

Marsh Spurge is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Marsh Spurge will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant 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 a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from 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 cuttings.

Marsh Spurge is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting 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 growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.