Royal Ruby Fetterbush

Leucothoe keiskei 'Royal Ruby'



Royal Ruby Fetterbush foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 6 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 5

Other Names: Doghobble, Dog Hobble

Description:

This compact shrub is grown primarily for its amazing, glossy green and burgundy foliage; small clusters of urn-shaped white flowers and arching stems add to its beauty; best in part-shade; water in extreme heat

Ornamental Features

Royal Ruby Fetterbush has attractive dark green foliage with red undersides which emerges burgundy in spring on a plant with an arching habit of growth. The glossy narrow leaves are highly ornamental and turn an outstanding burgundy in the fall, which persists throughout the winter. It is blanketed in stunning racemes of white flowers along the branches in mid summer.

Landscape Attributes

Royal Ruby Fetterbush is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a shapely form and gracefully arching branches. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. 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;

- Disease

Royal Ruby Fetterbush is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Royal Ruby Fetterbush will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 6 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This shrub does best in partial shade to full shade. Keep it well 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 is quite adaptable, prefering to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Royal Ruby Fetterbush 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.