Mexican Scarlet Sage

Salvia gesneriiflora



Mexican Scarlet Sage flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 6 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Description:

Beautiful scarlet flowers adorn this upright shrub in late winter and early spring; capable of growing very tall but branches tend to break from wind and rain; annual hard pruning prevents this; very fast growing and vigorous; foliage is very aromatic

Ornamental Features

Mexican Scarlet Sage features delicate spikes of scarlet flowers rising above the foliage from late winter to early spring. Its fragrant heart-shaped leaves remain green in colour throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Mexican Scarlet Sage is a multi-stemmed annual with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

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 butterflies 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

Mexican Scarlet Sage is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Mexican Scarlet Sage will grow to be about 6 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. Although it's not a true annual, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under typical garden conditions. 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 type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.

Mexican Scarlet Sage is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use 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.