Milk Bush

Euphorbia xylophylloides



Milk Bush
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 8 feet

Spread: 6 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9a

Other Names: Flattened Pencil Cactus

Description:

An upright, dense succulent; small clusters of yellow flowers appear from spring to fall at the end of flattened, leaf-like green stems; an interesting textural plant for dry sunny areas

Ornamental Features

Milk Bush has attractive green evergreen foliage on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth. The succulent oval leaves are highly ornamental and remain green throughout the winter. It features subtle clusters of buttery yellow flowers at the ends of the branches from late spring to early fall.

Landscape Attributes

Milk Bush is a dense multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, 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.

Milk Bush is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Milk Bush will grow to be about 8 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 6 feet. It has a low canopy, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more.

This shrub 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 xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. 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 division.

Milk Bush makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use 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 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.