Black Sea Barrenwort

Epimedium 'Black Sea'



Black Sea Barrenwort foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 8 inches

Flower Height: 14 inches

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 12 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 4b

Other Names: Bishop's Hat, Fairy Wings

Description:

Delicate butter yellow nodding flowers, reminiscent of columbine are borne on tall red stems; interesting foliage emerges green before turning smoky purple and fiery red in cooler temperatures; makes great shade groundcover

Ornamental Features

Black Sea Barrenwort features delicate nodding buttery yellow star-shaped flowers with red streaks rising above the foliage from mid to late spring. Its heart-shaped leaves are green in color. As an added bonus, the foliage turns gorgeous shades of deep purple and red in the fall. The red stems can be quite attractive.

Landscape Attributes

Black Sea Barrenwort is a dense herbaceous evergreen perennial with a ground-hugging habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting bees 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

Black Sea Barrenwort is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Black Sea Barrenwort will grow to be about 8 inches tall at maturity extending to 14 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 3 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 12 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. 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 partial shade to 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. This plant should not require much in the way of fertilizing once established, although it may appreciate a shot of general-purpose fertilizer from time to time early in the growing season. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. Consider covering it with a thick layer of mulch in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Black Sea Barrenwort is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its spreading habit of growth, it is ideally suited for use as a 'spiller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the edges where it can spill gracefully over the pot. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.