Dittany Of Crete

Origanum dictamnus



Dittany Of Crete foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 12 inches

Spread: 3 feet

Spacing: 30 inches

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 8a

Other Names: Cretan Dittany, Crete Dittany, Hop Marjoram

Description:

An ornamental variety with arching stems that produce interesting round leaves that are very wooly with some purple mottling; rose-pink flowers in summer with rose-purple bracts that persist; excellent color and texture for a rock garden or border front

Ornamental Features

Dittany Of Crete features showy clusters of pink flowers with violet overtones and rose bracts at the ends of the stems from mid summer to mid fall. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its attractive tomentose round leaves remain grayish green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Dittany Of Crete is an herbaceous perennial with a ground-hugging habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Dittany Of Crete is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Dittany Of Crete will grow to be about 12 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 30 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant should only be grown in full sunlight. 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 a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Dittany Of Crete 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.