East Bay Nursery

Poor Man's Rhododendron

Impatiens sodenii

Height: 8 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 10a

Other Names: Shrub Balsam, Touch-me-nots



Poor Man's Rhododendron flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Description:

Lovely clusters of pale pink flowers nearly year round in frost free areas; a great woodland or shade garden plant; showy foliage is deep green with a white midrib; frost damaged plants usually re-sprout from base, prune yearly to remove damaged branches

Ornamental Features

Poor Man's Rhododendron features showy clusters of shell pink round flowers with white overtones at the ends of the branches from early spring to early winter. It has attractive dark green foliage with pointy white spines. The glossy narrow leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color.



Poor Man's Rhododendron
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Poor Man's Rhododendron is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. 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 shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. 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.

Poor Man's Rhododendron is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Poor Man's Rhododendron will grow to be about 8 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This shrub does best in partial shade to shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in both summer and winter to conserve soil moisture and protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.

Poor Man's Rhododendron 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.