



Santa Fe Cholla Cactus

Opuntia viridiflora

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 6 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 5b

Other Names: *Cylindropuntia viridiflora*, Rattail Cholla

Group/Class: *Cylindropuntia*

Description:

Unique, cylindrical growth with crossing stems; the stems are topped with glowing yellow-orange flowers; it can be very spiny so handle the pads carefully

Ornamental Features

Santa Fe Cholla Cactus features showy orange flowers with yellow overtones at the ends of the stems in early summer. Its attractive succulent narrow leaves remain green in color with hints of purple throughout the year. The yellow fruits are carried on spikes in late summer.

Landscape Attributes

Santa Fe Cholla Cactus is an open herbaceous evergreen perennial with a ground-hugging habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other garden plants with finer foliage.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spiny

Santa Fe Cholla Cactus is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting



Santa Fe Cholla Cactus
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Planting & Growing

Santa Fe Cholla Cactus will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 6 feet. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years.

This plant should only be grown in full sunlight. It requires an extremely dry, well-drained growing location, and will usually 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 pH, but grows best in sandy soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided. This species is native to parts of North America.

Santa Fe Cholla Cactus 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. Be aware that in our climate, most plants cannot be expected to survive the winter if left in containers outdoors, and this plant is no exception. Contact our store for more information on how to protect it over the winter months.