Kaleidoscope Rainbow Bush

Portulacaria afra 'Medio-picta'



Kaleidoscope Rainbow Bush foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 24 inches

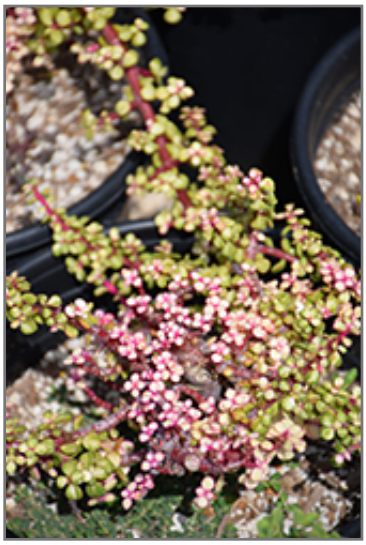
Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Midstripe Bush, Dwarf Jade Plant, Elephant Food

Description:

An upright, slow growing plant with interesting pinkish-red stems, and tiny succulent green leaves with wide cream middle stripes; popular use in bonsai; very drought tolerant and great for rock gardens or containers



Kaleidoscope Rainbow Bush in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Kaleidoscope Rainbow Bush is primarily valued in the garden for its ornamental upright and spreading habit of growth. It features dainty lavender flowers at the ends of the branches in early summer. Its attractive tiny succulent round leaves remain green in color with prominent creamy white stripes and tinges of white throughout the season. The ruby-red stems are very colorful and add to the overall interest of the plant.

Landscape Attributes

Kaleidoscope Rainbow Bush is a multi-stemmed annual with an upright spreading habit of growth. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and can be pruned at anytime. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects

Kaleidoscope Rainbow Bush is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

Kaleidoscope Rainbow Bush will grow to be about 24 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. Although it's not a true annual, this slow-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant 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 a low-water garden or xeriscape application. Like most succulents and cacti, this plant prefers to grow in poor soils and should therefore never be fertilized. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in poor soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America. It can be propagated by cuttings; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Kaleidoscope Rainbow Bush is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor containers and hanging baskets. 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 growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.