Mexican Hat

Ratibida columnifera

Plant Height: 18 inches

Flower Height: 3 feet

Spread: 18 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 3a

Other Names: Prairie Coneflower, Long-Head Coneflower

Description:

An erect, clump forming plant producing masses of bright yellow daisy flowers with tall cones at the center, that persist for a long time; ferny foliage is fine and attractive; an excellent border or container plant

Ornamental Features

Mexican Hat has masses of beautiful spikes of yellow daisy flowers rising above the foliage from early to late summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. Its ferny leaves remain bluish-green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Mexican Hat is an herbaceous perennial with tall flower stalks held atop a low mound of foliage. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

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 bees and butterflies to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Mexican Hat is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Mexican Hat flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Mexican Hat flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Mexican Hat will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity extending to 3 feet tall with the flowers, with a spread of 18 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 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 not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of North America. It can be propagated by division.

Mexican Hat is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting 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. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.