



Peruvian Apple Cactus

Cereus peruvianus

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight: ☉ ●

Hardiness Zone: 8a

Other Names: Column Cactus, Hedge Cactus, *Cereus repandus*

Description:

An erect, thorny columnar cactus with cylindrical gray-green to blue stems; large, cream colored nocturnal flowers open for only one night; edible, violet-red to yellow fruits appear in spring; an outstanding vertical accent for the garden or patio

Ornamental Features

Peruvian Apple Cactus This plant has creamy white daisy flowers with buttery yellow eyes and pink bracts along the branches from early to late winter, which are interesting on close inspection. It features an abundance of magnificent red berries with deep purple blush from late winter to late spring.

Landscape Attributes

Peruvian Apple Cactus is a large succulent evergreen plant with a columnar habit of growth. It commonly grows as a shrub-like plant with multiple 'branches' and stems. As a type of cactus, it has no true foliage; the body of the plant is wholly comprised of With age, this plant will eventually develop a woody gray 'trunk' at its base.



Peruvian Apple Cactus
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Peruvian Apple Cactus fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects
- Spiny

Peruvian Apple Cactus is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Vertical Accent
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



Peruvian Apple Cactus flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Peruvian Apple Cactus will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. 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 slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 80 years or more.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. 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 xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America.

Peruvian Apple Cactus makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base 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.