Lindley's
Nursery and
Garden Center

Dragon Fruit

Hylocereus undatus



Dragon Fruit fruit and flesh
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 10a

Other Names: syn. Cereus undatus, Hylocereus tricostatus

Description:

An exotic cactus with creeping, sprawling , or climbing stems that are spiny, and will branch profusely; scented, nocturnal white and green flowers appear in late spring, followed later by delicious, sweet red fruit; an amazing accent or container plant

Edible Qualities

Dragon Fruit is a large shrub that is commonly grown for its edible qualities, although it does have ornamental merits as well. It produces red oblong fruit with light green tips and white flesh which are typically harvested when mature. The fruits have a sweet taste and a fleshy texture.

The fruit are most often used in the following ways:

- Fresh Eating
- Juice-Making



Dragon Fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Features & Attributes

Dragon Fruit features showy fragrant white cup-shaped flowers with buttery yellow eyes and green bracts along the branches from late spring to early summer. The flowers are excellent for cutting. It has attractive green evergreen foliage. The succulent narrow leaves are highly ornamental and remain green throughout the winter. It features an abundance of magnificent red berries with light green tips from mid summer to early fall. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. The spiny bark and green branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

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This is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage. This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and can be pruned at anytime. 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;

- Invasive
- Spiny

Aside from its primary use as an edible, Dragon Fruit is sutiable for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Orchard/Edible Landscaping
- Container Planting



Dragon Fruit foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Dragon Fruit will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more.

This shrub is quite ornamental as well as edible, and is as much at home in a landscape or flower garden as it is in a designated edibles garden. It should only be grown in full sunlight. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any 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 type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by cuttings.

Dragon Fruit is a good choice for the edible garden, 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.