Town & Country gardens

Rock Cinquefoil

Potentilla rupestris



Rock Cinquefoil flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 8 inches

Spread: 8 inches

Spacing: 6 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Ornamental Features

Rock Cinquefoil features delicate white flowers with yellow eyes at the ends of the stems from early to mid summer. Its small tomentose oval compound leaves remain emerald green in color throughout the season.

Landscape Attributes

Rock Cinquefoil is a dense herbaceous perennial with a mounded form. It brings an extremely fine and delicate texture to the garden composition and should be used to full effect.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. 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;

- Spreading

Rock Cinquefoil is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

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Planting & Growing

Rock Cinquefoil will grow to be about 8 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 8 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 6 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain low and dense right to the ground. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 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 does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is not particular as to soil type, but has a definite preference for alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Rock Cinquefoil is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers against which the thriller plants stand out. 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 experts for more information on how to protect it over the winter months.