

Euphorbia tithymaloides

(Buck-thorn, Redbird Cactus, devil's backbone)

Easily recognizable plant from its rubbery zig-zag stem and the reddish flower in the summertime. This succulent perennial shrub has milky sap all over . Make sure you wash your hand if some latex touched your skin. The leaves are glossy and slightly lobed. In tropical regions the flowers appearing all year around. Winter cold or an extended drought can cause the leaves to completely drop off. Best planted in full sun and sandy soil. Widely available variety is the 'Variegatus' with white and green leaves.



Plant Image

Landscape Information

French Name: Pantoufflier

Arabic Name: يوفوريا تيتيمالويدس

Pronunciation: (ped e lan' thus tith' e ma loi' dees

Plant Type: Cactus / Succulent

Origin: Tropical America

Heat Zones: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

Hardiness Zones: 10, 11, 12

Uses: Hedge, Specimen, Border Plant, Indoor, Green Wall

Size/Shape

Growth Rate: Fast

Tree Shape: Spreading

Canopy Symmetry: Irregular

Canopy Density: Dense

Canopy Texture: Medium

Height at Maturity: 1 to 1.5 m

Spread at Maturity: 0.5 to 1 meter

Time to Ultimate Height: 10 to 20 Years

Notes

Milky sap from all parts is toxic if ingested

Euphorbia tithymaloides

(Buck-thorn, Redbird Cactus, devil's backbone)



Flower Image

Botanical Description

Foliage

Leaf Arrangement: Opposite

Leaf Venation: Pinnate

Leaf Persistence: Evergreen

Leaf Type: Simple

Leaf Blade: 5 - 10 cm

Leaf Shape: Oval

Leaf Margins: Dentate, Lobate

Leaf Textures: Glossy

Leaf Scent: No Fragrance

Color(growing season): Green

Color(changing season): Green

Flower

Flower Showiness: True

Flower Size Range: 3 - 7

Flower Scent: No Fragrance

Flower Color: Red

Trunk

Trunk Has Crownshaft: False

Trunk Susceptibility to Breakage: Generally resists breakage

Number of Trunks: Single Trunk

Trunk Esthetic Values: Not Showy

Fruit

Fruit Showiness: False

Fruit Size Range: 1.5 - 3

Fruit Colors: Red

Euphorbia tithymaloides

(Buck-thorn, Redbird Cactus, devil's backbone)



Leaf Image

Horticulture Management

Tolerance

Frost Tolerant: No

Heat Tolerant: Yes

Drought Tolerant: Yes

Salt Tolerance: Moderate

Requirements

Soil Requirements: Loam, Sand

Soil Ph Requirements: Acidic, Neutral, Alkaline

Water Requirements: Low

Light Requirements: Full, Part

Management

Toxity: Yes

Invasive Potential: No

Susceptibility to Pests and Diseases: No

Pruning Requirement: Needed, to develop a strong structure

Fruit/ Leaves/ Flowers litter: No

Surface Rooting: No

Life Span: Less than 25

Diseases: Powdery Mildew, Leaf Spots

Edible Parts: None

Plant Propagations: Cutting
