Black Hens And Chicks

Sempervivum 'Black'

Plant Height: 5 inches

Flower Height: 12 inches

Spread: 8 inches

Spacing: 8 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 3a

Other Names: House Leek

Description:

A mat forming succulent perennial that has symmetrical rosettes of thick, fleshy bright green leaves accented with dark burgundy and black tips; takes on purplish-copper tones in cold weather; great for rock gardens or containers

Ornamental Features

Black Hens And Chicks is primarily valued in the garden for its distinctive form, with the flower stalks towering over the foliage. It attractive succulent pointy leaves are green in colour with prominent burgundy tips and tinges of black. As an added bonus, the foliage turns a gorgeous burgundy in the fall.

Landscape Attributes

Black Hens And Chicks is a dense herbaceous perennial with tall flower stalks held atop a low mound of foliage. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.



Black Hens And Chicks
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Black Hens And Chicks
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. 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

Black Hens And Chicks is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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



Black Hens And Chicks flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Black Hens And Chicks will grow to be only 5 inches tall at maturity extending to 12 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 8 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 8 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 20 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 considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Black Hens And Chicks 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 canvas of foliage against which the larger 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.