

Feathery Cassia

The Feathery Cassia is the most desert-hardy species within this genus, and was first introduced into Arriyadh's residential areas in the early 1980s (CE) at the Staff Housing project for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its silvery, compound foliage is finely textured and soft with leaflets. It is not shed in winters, but makes an interesting background for showy bright-yellow flower clusters which last until spring. Each flower exudes a pleasant scent. Seeds ripen in flat, brown pods that remain on the twigs until late summer, and may reduce the shrub's attractiveness to some people. Once established, this plant tolerates neglect and still performs well growing moderately to fast, reaching 2 metres in height and width. Its shape is round at first, later developing multiple stems. Native to eastern Australia, it is used to reflected heat, full sun and a permanent lack of water. Any gritty soil is accepted as long as water can penetrate easily. Waterlogging is soon indicated by chlorotic leaves, and eventually kills the plant. Pruning and clipping can be done at any time of the year, but the plants do not warrant such attention. Frosts down to -9°C do not cause damage to leaves and twigs, but may spoil the flowering. Feathery Cassias are propagated by cuttings. Seeds need to be stratified by boiling water or brief fires. These shrubs look well in rock gardens and urban design projects, and make ideal colonisers on embankments. If their growing conditions are met, they make long-lived plants free of pests and diseases.



GENERAL

Origin	: Mediterranean, sub-tropical
Vigour	: fairly fast growing
Humidity	: semi-arid, semi-humid, very humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out, cuttings
Maintenance	: low

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: resistant
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: low
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (2000 ppm)
Hardiness	: -9°C

SHAPE

Type	: shrub
Height	: 2 m-3 m
Spread	: 1.5 m-3 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: pastel yellow
Size	: 1 cm - 1.5 cm
Period	: January - April
Smell	: scented, flower

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: pod
Fruit size	: 6 cm