

Baby Sun-Rose

This succulent perennial groundcover is native to South Africa and belongs to the ice plant family (Aizoaceae, formerly Mesembryanthemaceae). It retains its fleshy leaves all year round. They are heart-shaped, about 3 cm long and their bright green contrasts well with the tiny but numerous magenta flowers that appear in summer and autumn. They consist of string-like petals that enclose a small white centre, and open only during sunshine when they attract bees and butterflies. Flowers are borne in the leaf axils and develop into capsules about 1 cm in size. Plants will not exceed 10 cm height, but stems quickly grow to 60 cm in length. It tolerates full sun when the soil is gritty and not too dry. Even though its succulent leaves store water, *A. cordifolia* does not revel in heat or reflected sun. The plants may even become chlorotic and can eventually expose unsightly bare twigs that will not recover properly. Light frosts, as may occur in Arriyadh, do not harm this plant. In rock gardens, it makes an excellent groundcover. It does well in containers too, where it looks best spilling over the edge. Pruning is easy and possible at any time. Propagation by cuttings is simple and seeds also germinate well. There are variegated types or cultivars with different blossom colours such as white, yellow, red and violet. *A. cordifolia* is best planted in small areas in Arriyadh, where it can be used as a groundcover, in a rockery, a hanging basket or cascading over the edge of a container.



GENERAL

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

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (1200 ppm)
Hardiness	: -3°C

SHAPE

Type	: cacti, succulents
Height	: 0.1 m
Spread	: 1 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: pink, red
Period	: July - September

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 1.5 cm
Toxicity	: inedible