

Gold Ice Plant, *Orange Ice Plant*

This sturdy plant originates from the Western Cape region, South Africa. Gold Ice Plants are small shrubs with succulent leaves arranged in pairs. In ideal conditions, they can grow up to 50 cm high, but they usually form low mats of some 15 cm. The foliage is dark green, but turns pale bluish-green in drought and may reach 5 cm in length. During its flowering period, the entire plant is covered with bright-orange, daisy-like flowers borne in stalked clusters or single, each measuring some 5 cm across. They close at night and will not open unless bright sunlight induces them to do so. Accordingly, they are also known as Midday Plants or Municipal Workers, because the inflorescences open at 9 in the morning and close at 5 in the afternoon. Flowers appear from late spring until early autumn, after pollination by insects, they are followed by capsules. An adaptation to desert conditions is a mechanism that seeds are not released from the capsules before it rains, even if this takes several months. Seeds are produced in abundance and are an easy method for multiplying the plants. Another method of propagation is to take cuttings in autumn. The plant grows well in sand or loam, but does not tolerate waterlogging. By virtue of the leaves' capacity to store water, established plants do well with little supplemental irrigation. Watering may be done with medium levels of salt. Gold Ice Plants are suitable for large groundcover areas and containers. In Arriyadh, they withstand the harsh conditions of hot sun and winter cold very well.



**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	: resistant
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: low
Salinity/ppm	: high (3500 ppm)
Hardiness	: -3°C

**SHAPE**

Type	: cacti, succulents
Height	: 0.15 m-0.5 m
Spread	: 0.4 m-0.6 m
Foliage	: evergreen

**FLOWER**

Colour	: bright orange
Size	: 5 cm - 6 cm
Period	: May - August

**FRUIT**

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 0.5 cm
Toxicity	: inedible