

Noon Flower, Yellow Vygie

GENERAL

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

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: resistant
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: low
Salinity/ppm	: high (4000 ppm)
Hardiness	: -9°C

SHAPE

Type	: cacti, succulents
Height	: 0.2 m-0.6 m
Spread	: 0.3 m-0.9 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: yellow
Size	: 4 cm
Period	: April - May

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 0.8 cm

The Yellow Vygie is one of more than 220 species of this genus, which makes it the largest group within the ice plant family (Aizoaceae). Glaucus is the Greek word for blue, and refers to the colour of the three-angled leaves that protect this perennial from glaring sun. The plant grows fairly quickly to build a dense cushion up to 60 cm in height, but usually much lower, forming mats of some 20 cm. Large, sulphur-yellow flowers cover the plant in spring. If pollinated by insects, the flowers develop into woody capsules that contain numerous seeds. It grows in full sun to partial shade, tolerates heat but also survives frosts up to -10°C. Tolerating a considerable period of drought makes the Yellow Vygie interesting for xeriscape (water-wise) uses. Frequent watering is appreciated, but the plant may quickly be overwatered in heavy soils. Propagation is simple by cuttings, but the surface must callous before planting. The plants also grow well from seeds. Capsules swell up after sufficient rain only to release seeds when there is a sufficient amount of water to ensure successful germination. This robust plant gives a showy display without much effort. It is an ideal groundcover or group plant for low-maintenance gardens, parks and in containers. Infestations are rare, but weak plants may be attacked by scale, which requires treatment with a systemic pesticide. Some compost is welcome, although the plants are used to poor and alkaline soil conditions.

