

Beach Morning Glory

GENERAL

Origin	: sub-tropical, tropical
Vigour	: 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	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: high (4500 ppm)
Hardiness	: 0°C

SHAPE

Type	: perennial
Height	: 0.1 m-0.2 m
Spread	: 5 m-30 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: lilac, pink, purple
Size	: 5 cm - 10 cm
Period	: June - September

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 1.7 cm

From the West Indies, the Beach Morning Glory began to spread, and is now found growing on beaches and dunes in subtropical and tropical climates. It is well established in Arriyadh. It covers the soil sparsely with long stems that root at the nodes to fix itself on the ground. This trait is valued in controlling erosion. Roots may reach 3 metres deep and one plant can cover an area of 30 metres across while being less than 10 cm high. To resist heat and strong winds the evergreen leaves are stiff, almost succulent, and they are lobed like the imprint of a goat's hoof. Its species' name, pes-caprae, means foot of a goat. Cold winters may cause it to go dormant and shed its foliage. The funnel-shaped, lilac flowers are very attractive and are borne in late spring until autumn. They measure about 5 cm in diameter and open in the morning, hence their vernacular name Morning Glory. Another common name is Railroad Vine, referring to its very fast growth that occasionally needs to be controlled. Adverse conditions such as high salinity, torrid sun and prolonged drought are tolerated by established plants. Frost will cause dieback and plants often have bare patches where damage has been caused. Although the plant can be grown from seed, it is usually started from cuttings. Beach Morning Glories are ideal plants in low-maintenance gardens with poor soil. Since they do not cover the soil densely, weeds may penetrate the area, so that mulching is required on fertile ground.

