

Hollyhock

GENERAL

Origin	: temperate, sub-Mediterranean, Mediterranean
Vigour	: fast growing
Humidity	: semi-arid, semi- humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out, division
Maintenance	: high

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (1200 ppm)
Hardiness	: -15°C

SHAPE

Type	: biennial, perennial
Height	: 0.8 m-2.2 m
Spread	: 0.6 m-1.2 m
Foliage	: deciduous

FLOWER

Colour	: pink, white, violet
Size	: 6 cm - 10 cm
Period	: June - December

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: schizocarp
Fruit size	: 0.7 cm

The Hollyhock is a biennial or perennial plant originating in China and southwest Asia. It is a good structure plant for a sheltered garden border in Arriyadh, where it will grow best during the cooler time of the year to a height of over 2 metres. *A. rosea* has an upright, candelabrum form: its hibiscus-like flowers usually appear on long spikes in midsummer, but its best showing in Arriyadh is during the winter, when it provides seasonal colour. There is a wide range of flower colours from light yellow, pink and red to nearly black. The leaves are almost circular and large, the size of a hand. The fruit contains many seeds. The root system is shallow, up to 40 cm deep, and roots are fine and fleshy. The plant prefers a well-drained soil with ample irrigation and likes full sun and regular fertilisation; otherwise, the leaves can be affected by rust. Seed propagation requires warm, dark and humid conditions. Flowers, seeds and roots can be used medicinally. A tea extracted from the flowers helps with coughs and inflammation of the throat: a tea from the roots is used for digestive problems. Hollyhock can be used as impressive accent plants in naturally designed planting schemes. If the flowers and fruits are allowed to remain on the plant until they are ripe, *A. rosea* seeds itself very easily, creating interesting and unexpected garden compositions. The plant should be pruned back to 15 cm above the ground in spring.

