

Trailing Gazania

GENERAL

Origin	: Mediterranean, sub-tropical
Vigour	: normal growth rate
Humidity	: very arid, semi-arid, semi-humid, very humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out, cuttings, division
Maintenance	: low

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (2500 ppm)
Hardiness	: -6°C

SHAPE

Type	: perennial
Height	: 0.2 m-0.4 m
Spread	: 0.4 m-0.7 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: bright yellow
Size	: 3 cm - 4 cm
Period	: March - June

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: achene
Fruit size	: 0.3 cm

The Trailing Gazania does not present as spectacular flowers as its relatives, but still makes one of the most useful perennials to have. It grows wild in South Africa and Mozambique; in Arriyadh, it is a very dependable groundcover. In parks and large gardens with adverse growing conditions such as dry, exposed sites, it performs better than other groundcovers. It grows prostrate and blankets the bare ground fairly quickly. The glabrous leaves are long and slender, appearing green in light shade, but somewhat silvery if fully exposed to sunlight. They persist in winter and withstand low temperatures and even light frosts, but they sometimes look poor in scorching heat. Drought is tolerated, but the plants appreciate occasional watering. In spring and summer, bright yellow flowers with centres in the same colour appear, measuring about 3 to 4 cm across. Removing spent flowers results in extra inflorescences. They close during the night and do not open on overcast days. After pollination, they develop fuzzy, white seeds. These readily germinate, but offspring may also be achieved by cuttings or division, when the stems root where they touch the soil. This Gazania is the ideal plant to grow over dry banks or to cascade over walls or edges of tubs. It may be clipped to shape, creating cutwork parterres. It is generally pest-free and resists diseases if good air circulation is possible. Flowers close if water is applied by sprinklers. On appropriate sites, the Trailing Gazania is almost maintenance-free.

