

Chenille Plant

GENERAL

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

CONDITIONS

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| Urban climate | : vulnerable |
| Dessication | : vulnerable |
| Stagnant water | : vulnerable |
| Irrigation | : medium |
| Salinity/ppm | : moderate (1800 ppm) |
| Hardiness | : +3°C |

SHAPE

| | |
|---------|-------------|
| Type | : shrub |
| Height | : 2 m-3 m |
| Spread | : 2 m-3 m |
| Foliage | : evergreen |

FLOWER

| | |
|--------|-----------------|
| Colour | : bright red |
| Size | : 30 cm - 50 cm |
| Period | : May - August |

FRUIT

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| Type of fruit | : capsule |
| Fruit size | : 0.1 cm |

The Chenille Plant is an attractive shrub, some 3 metres high, that originates from southeast Asia. A lush impact may be achieved by dark-green leaves of about 15 cm in length. They contrast well with the bright red, furry catkins. The latter may become up to 50 cm long, and account for common names such as Fox Tail or Red Hot Cat's Tail. Scattered blooming all year round makes the female Chenille Plant highly desirable for use in planting. It flowers most heavily in early summer. Propagation by seeds and cuttings is easily possible; note that the more attractive flowers are borne on female plants. It sometimes naturalises in favourable conditions but does not become a nuisance in Arriyadh, owing to a lack of water beyond irrigated areas. It can be used as an accent plant or flowering hedge. Severe pruning results in lush, rejuvenated growth and is an appropriate method to keep a neat habit. Its size can also be controlled by pinching the tips and pruning without damaging the leaves. It tolerates heavy and alkaline soil, but needs frequent watering if exposed to full sun. Partial sun and even some shade suit it better. Wind and low humidity may provoke dried leaf margins; these should be avoided by choosing the right planting location carefully. It is vulnerable to industrial fumes and urban microclimates. The Chenille Plant is rarely affected by pests. If grown indoors, it may occasionally be infested by scales. It should be considered that the plant is poisonous if eaten by animals.

