



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Hummingbird Nopal

Nopalea karwinskiana

DESCRIPTION: Hummingbird Nopal is a relative of prickly pears but differs in its flowers. Instead of opening wide, this species' flowers form a long tube of red petals. Hummingbirds are attracted to these beautiful blooms. These flowers can occur any time of the year except if the plant is stressed from too little water or too cold of temperatures. It can grow to 8' tall or more, but is easy to contain with occasional nipping. Hummingbird Nopal is native to tropical Mexico and is used in gardens in Sonora.

RECOMMENDED USE: Use as an accent, potted specimen, or in the background of a hummingbird garden.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: Hummingbird Nopal has been tested to brief drops to 25°F with some damage. We feel temperatures nearing 20°F could be lethal.



Sun tolerance: The species tolerates full sun to moderate shade. Too much shade could bring on leggy growth and poor flowering.



Watering and feeding: It is a low to moderate water user in the ground and uses a moderate amount during the summer in a container. For pot culture, water every 5-8 days when growing. Feed container plants once a year with a liquid or pellet fertilizer.



Soil requirements: Use any fast draining potting soil. In the ground it will do well in most soils that drain.



Pruning: Any time. Pruning scars can be eliminated by rubbing off newly emerging pads that are not desired.

Note: Although spines are not apparent, this plant has many easily detached small spines, called glochids, on the stems and fruits.