

Fernbush

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Description

Fernbush is a medium sized shrub native to gravelly slopes in much of the western United States. It has a rounded form that typically reaches a height and width of 5 feet. The semi-evergreen fernlike leaves have a pleasant spicy fragrance. In mid summer, small white flowers form dense, pointed clusters at the tips of the branches. The reddish bark contrasts nicely with the pale green leaves and provides an attractive feature in the winter. The fern-like leaves account for the name fernbush. It is not related to ferns however, and is actually a member of the Rose family



Fernbush

Chamaebatiaria millefolium (Torr.) Maxim.

Landscape Uses: Specimen or accent plant, hedge or screening
Characteristics: 5 ft. height
5 ft. width
Semi-evergreen, fern-like leaves with spicy fragrance
Dense clusters of small white flowers that attract bees
Hardiness: USDA zone 6
Elevation: 4,000 to 7,000 ft
Soil Adaptation: Tolerates any well-drained soil but can adapt to other soils
Cultivars: None available at time of printing

Cultural Requirements

Fernbush prefers a well-drained soil, but it can adapt to other soil types.

Supplemental water is required for establishment, and applying fertilizer at this time is also helpful. Once established, additional water is not required for survival, but occasional watering during the summer months will increase foliage density and will encourage more profuse flowering.

Fernbush prefers sunny, droughty sites, and it is recommended for south and west-facing exposures and areas that are difficult to irrigate.

Removal of old flower heads in late winter is recommended for a well-groomed look.

Propagation

Fernbush is propagated from seed. The very small seed should be sown on the soil surface and not covered with soil. A three-month cold, moist stratification is required for germination. Keep soil surface moist so seed does not dry out.

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