Stinking Hellebore

Helleborus foetidus



Stinking Hellebore flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 24 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Spacing: 18 inches

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Bear's Foot Hellebore

Description:

Chartreuse colored buttercup-type blooms and glossy blue-green foliage; one of the first flowers to come up in cool weather and what a beautiful harbinger they are; great in woodland gardens and on shaded slopes

Ornamental Features

Stinking Hellebore features showy nodding chartreuse cup-shaped flowers at the ends of the stems from late winter to early spring. Its glossy pointy compound leaves remain bluish-green in color throughout the year.

Landscape Attributes

Stinking Hellebore is an herbaceous evergreen perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Stinking Hellebore is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Stinking Hellebore will grow to be about 20 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 18 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

This plant does best in partial shade to shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. This species is not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division.