
ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE

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GRAY SANTOLINA PRODUCTION AND CONSUMER CARE

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INTRODUCTION

- Common name: Lavender cotton or Gray Santolina
- Scientific name: *Santolina chamaecyparissus*
- Species name '*chamaecyparissus*' means 'dwarf cypress'
- Native to the Mediterranean, including Spain and Morocco
- Evergreen, woody stemmed, perennial shrub growing up to 2 feet tall and 3 feet in diameter
- Moderate growth rate
- Foliage is silver/gray and aromatic
- Alternate, finely textured leaves
- Yellow flowers grow in flowerheads held 4-8 inches above foliage
- Hardiness zones 7-10

- Commonly used as edging or ground cover
- Blooms August-September
- Pests and diseases are rare

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- Requires full sun
- Low water usage when established; drought tolerant
- Grows best in sandy or loam media; avoid clay
- Grows well in neutral or alkaline media
- Requires media with excellent drainage
- A constant feed program of 100-125 ppm of 20-10-20 fertilizer is recommended

- Excellent seashore plant that tolerates salty maritime environments
- Plant 3 feet apart when used as ground cover, 18 inches apart when used as edging.
- In spring, cut off barren stems and cut back healthy stems to encourage bushy growth
- In cold climates, use mulch for extra protection

PROPAGATION

- Allow seedheads to dry on plants; remove and collect seeds
- Sow seeds in the spring in a greenhouse. Pre-treatment is not required.
- Seeds germinate in 4-8 days at 72°F.
- Transplant seedlings 18-24 days after sowing or grow them on in the greenhouse for their first winter.
- Plant seedlings outdoors in late spring or early summer.
- Can be propagated from herbaceous stem cuttings
- Cut a 3 or 4 inch length of tender new growth at the end of a stem.
- Strip the foliage off of the lower inch or two and insert the cutting into a shallow container of damp, sandy soil.
- Cuttings will develop roots in a week or two and can be planted in the yard shortly thereafter

DISORDERS

- If grown correctly, pests and diseases are rare
- Shaded or poorly drained sites promote fungus
- If there is a fungus infection, remove heavily infected plants and soil.

Prune back lightly infected plants to remove diseased foliage.

- Root rot (*Phytophthora*) can occur; remove infected plants

CONSUMER CARE

- Most drought tolerant of all the Santolinas
- Over-fertilization cause plants to overgrow, become leggy, and become prone to disease and pest problems
- Shady or poorly drained areas promote disease
- Shear in early spring and again after blooming to shape and tighten foliage
- Planted together with *S. virens* in elaborate intertwining designs in formal gardens
- Keep leaves clipped for formal gardens or edging
- Let yellow flowers emerge for extra color in an informal garden
- Leaves can be used in flavoring sauces or dried in Pot-pourri
- Can be used to moth-proof linens and wools
- Growing plants repel insects, especially cabbage moths
- Resists deer and rabbits

CULTIVARS AND SPECIES

- *Santolina chamaecyparissus*
 - 'Weston': dwarf form more ornamental than the species
 - 'Nana': slow growing dwarf form 8-10 inches tall
 - 'Lambrook Silver': leaves more silvery than the species
 - 'Lemon Queen': dwarf and mounding
 - 'Pretty Carroll': hybrid between species and cultivar 'Nana'

- 'Plumosus': lacy finely cut foliage

References

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