Achillea spp.¹

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Introduction

Achillea species are 18-to 36-inch-tall perennials that bear masses of flowers throughout the summer (Fig. 1). The 60 to 100 species of Yarrow are ancient, spreading, semi-evergreen herbs that are long lived. The aromatic, finely-divided leaves are alternate or in basal rosettes. The leaf margins may be simple and toothed to pinnately dissected. However, most of these species have attractive feathery or fern-like foliage. The flowers may be single or double and come in shades of pink, yellow and white; flower heads are mostly in fine-textured corymbs.

General Information

Scientific name: Achillea spp.
Pronunciation: ack-ill-LEE-uh species
Common name(s): Yarrow
Family: Compositea
Plant type: perennial; herbaceous
USDA hardness zones: 3 through 9 (Fig. 2)
Planting month for zone 7: year round
Planting month for zone 8: year round
Planting month for zone 9: year round
Origin: native to Florida
Uses: border; edging; ground cover; mass planting
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 1 to 3 feet

Spread: 2 to 3 feet
Plant habit: spreading; upright
Plant density: open
Growth rate: moderate
Texture: fine

Figure 1. Yarrow.

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Leaf arrangement: basal rosette
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: parted
Leaf shape: variable
Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: red; white; yellow
Flower characteristic: spring flowering; summer flowering; fall flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: no fruit
Fruit length: no fruit
Fruit cover: no fruit
Fruit color: not applicable
Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable
Current year stem/twig color: gray/silver
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay;
Drought tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 18 to 24 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.
Use and Management

These lovely flowers are good in fresh or dried arrangements. Achillea species may be used in the landscape as an edging or ground cover and are stunning when massed. They flop over as they grow taller, becoming a spreading mass of fine-textured foliage.

Achillea species should be placed in an area of the landscape that receives full sun. They require well-drained soils and are quite drought tolerant. However, these perennials will sometimes not tolerate hot, humid weather. They will endure light foot traffic and seashore environments. Some species are rather weak and may require staking to hold them erect.

Popular species include *Achillea taygetea*.

Propagate these species by seed or division.

Pests and Diseases

None of major concern.