

# Giant Sword Flower

## *Hesperaloe funifera*

**Size:**

6' tall x 6-8' wide

**Evergreen/Deciduous:**

Evergreen

**Water Needs:**

Low

**Exposure:**

Full sun, reflected heat

**Hardiness:**

-10 degrees F.

**Bloom Period:**

Summer – Fall

**General:** Giant Sword Flower is a clumping, stemless, upright accent plant composed of bunches of long, narrow, rigid leaves. The leaf margins have coarse, white fibers which peel back as the plant ages. In summer, one or more 12' flower spikes emerge from the center of the plant with creamy white blooms.

**Designer:** *Hesperaloe funifera* is an outstanding and tough accent plant with a very bold form that stands out when used with low desert shrubs and perennials. This plant is very tidy and can be used near pools. It is also very striking when displayed in a large container. The flowers are great both to feed hummingbirds and as a favorite perch.

**Maintenance:** Remove spent flower stalks if and when desired. Spent or low hanging leaves can also be removed.

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# Bull Grass

## *Muhlenbergia emersleyi* 'El Toro'

**Size:**  
Up to 2-3' tall x 2-3' wide

**Evergreen/Deciduous:**  
Semi-Evergreen

**Water Needs:**  
Low

**Exposure:**  
Full sun, part shade, reflected heat

**Hardiness:**  
10 degrees F.

**Bloom Period:**  
Fall

**General:** This petite, dense grass grows to about 3 feet tall and wide. The long blue-green leaves are wider than the other *Muhlenbergia* species. In the fall months it sends up masses of loose, rosy-purple flower spikes, which dry to a tan color in the winter. This is one of the most drought-tolerant muhlys. 'El Toro' is a trademarked ornamental grass from Mountain State Wholesale Nursery.

**Designer:** 'El Toro' looks great as an accent plant in the landscape, or in a mass planting. This wonderful ornamental grass has fairly thick and dense blue-green foliage. Blooms and foliage bring movement to the garden. The airy nature and wonderful, soft architecture of the blooms is particularly delightful in this species.

**Maintenance:** Low. Cut back in early spring flat to the ground at a height of about 2-4". Be careful not to cut back during the hot summer months! A vigorous spring pruning will remove any dormant foliage and flower spikes.



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# Lavender Cotton

## *Santolina chamaecyparissus*

**Size:**

1-2' tall x 2-5' wide

**Evergreen/Deciduous:**

Evergreen

**Water Needs:**

Low

**Exposure:**

Full sun, light shade

**Hardiness:**

0 degrees F.

**Bloom Period:**

Summer

**General:** *Santolina chamaecyparissus* forms a broad, dense mound of silvery gray-green. The small leaves are highly aromatic when crushed. The form can become open after flowering, but usually fills in well with new growth. Flowers appear on new growth as button-shaped yellow heads.

**Designer:** *Santolina* looks great in Mediterranean and English-style gardens, or as edging in a xeriscape garden. This plant is a valuable source of solid gray, and creates a real contrast with green foliage in the garden. It can be sheared for a more formal look, which will also keep the growth more dense. The natural growth habit is soft and billowing. The foliage has an attractive and unusual interesting form.

**Maintenance:** Low. Lavender Cotton is drought and salt spray tolerant. For best results, avoid fertilization as Lavender Cotton prefers dry, low-fertility soil. Prune in fall or winter after flowering occurs.

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# Gray Creeping Germander

## *Teucrium aroanium*

**Size:**

Up to 12" tall x 4-6' wide

**Evergreen/Deciduous:**

Evergreen

**Water Needs:**

Low

**Exposure:**

Full sun

**Hardiness:**

15 degrees F.

**Bloom Period:**

Spring, Summer, Fall

**General:** This species of germander is native to Greece. It is a low-growing, herbaceous, evergreen perennial with a woody stem at the base. The plant features evergreen, ovate to oblong, silvery green leaves (to 3/4" long) and whorls of two-lipped, 3/4" long, light purple flowers appearing in clusters.

**Designer:** Gray Creeping Germander looks sublime in rock gardens or herb gardens as a small scale ground cover. Its gray-green foliage and soft texture contrast well with bold forms and green foliage. The flowers form in exquisite tight circles that add extra beauty to this wonderful plant.

**Maintenance:** No maintenance is required except if needed to be pruned for size. No serious insect or disease problems are noted or known. It is best grown in average to somewhat gritty, dry to medium moisture, well-drained soils in full sun. Tolerates poor soils as long as drainage is good. Does not perform well in any areas other than in full sun or with only minimal shade.

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# Prostrate Germander

## *Teucrium chamaedrys 'Prostratum'*

**Size:**

1-3' tall x 2-3' wide

**Evergreen/Deciduous:**

Evergreen

**Water Needs:**

Low to moderate

**Exposure:**

Full sun to partial shade

**Hardiness:**

-10 degrees F.

**Bloom Period:**

Spring

**General:** Prostrate Germander is native to dry hill-sides of the Mediterranean region. **It's a low-growing perennial** whose very dark green foliage seems to belie its drought tolerant nature. Pinkish-purple flower spikes rise slightly above the foliage mass in spring. **The leaves are tiny giving this plant a very "soft" appearance.**

**Designer:** The very rich dark-green foliage makes Prostrate Germander an excellent choice when used as a contrast with more bluish and silver foliage. Similarly, the soft visual element of the tiny leaves works very well with the strong form of many succulents. **It's** very low, prostrate form works well with boulders and in rock gardens. Besides all its other wonderful characteristics, the flower show adds a nice splash of color to the garden.

**Maintenance:** Low. Requires no pruning, but shearing down to **about 6"** after winter and after flowering keeps the plants denser and removes spent flower stalks. This plant has no pest or disease problems of which we're aware, but does not respond well to over-watering.

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