



# Spuria Iris

## Aspect

Must be in full sun or little or no flowers will result.

## Climate

Hot dry areas with low summer rainfall are best. If there is a lot of summer rainfall, Mustard Seed fungus can cause rot problems. They also require winter cold, preferably some frost.

## Soil type

They like a good rich soil with some depth. Good drainage is important but a moist soil, as long as excess water can drain away, is fine. They are fairly tolerant of pH and do well in sandy soil or clay loam.

## When to plant

The ideal time is late summer and autumn. They resent being moved and often won't flower very well in the year after moving. They also usually fall if moved too early as the rhizomes have to mature.

## Replanting

Select a place to plant Spurias where they can stay for 4 or more years, as they will give a good show if left in place as long as they have some annual fertiliser program. They don't mind being a bit crowded.

## Depth of planting

Cover with at least 5cms of soil. If they are too near the surface they will not take hold as well and will take extra time to become established until they can pull themselves down.

**Distance apart** - 40cms to 60cms

## Fertilisers

On planting use pelletised animal manure and/or Osmocote underneath and a side dressing of balanced fertiliser in spring. Summer dressings of old compost or old animal manure can be applied in later years, taking care to keep it away from the plants. Work it gently into the ground. Generally much the same as for Tall Bearded Iris.

## Watering

This is quite important. Spurias have a dormant period over summer, and at this stage they should have little or no water until the growth starts again in autumn. So select a place where water can be withdrawn over summer. Rot can easily result if over-watered.

## Winter joy

Because these Iris have a summer dormancy, they start to grow in autumn and have delightful foliage over winter and early spring and look very effective in a garden setting with dark green sword-like foliage.

## Diseases

A little leaf spot is noticeable and is rarely a worry.

## Cut flowers

Possibly the Iris with the most potential as a cut flower. They flower in November when most other Iris have finished. They can have stems up to 4 ft long for large vases and they are not as fragile as other Iris. Pick in bud 1 or 2 days from opening.