



About Soapwort

Rock soapwort, also known as *Saponaria ocymoides*, is a charming perennial plant that can be grown in your garden with ease. It thrives in sunny settings and prefers light, lean, well-draining soil. Follow these steps to successfully cultivate this delightful perennial.

Soapwort gained popularity for its abundance of saponins, making it a favored ingredient in mild soap formulations. All components of the soapwort plant contain saponins, posing a significant risk to fish; thus, it's advisable to refrain from planting it in close proximity to ponds and water gardens. Additionally, it has mild toxicity to humans and livestock.

When to Plant

Sow soapwort seeds early in the season. This is typically in the early spring right after your last frost. Rock soapwort seeds benefit from cold stratification.

Where to Plant

Rock soapwort can be directly seeded into your garden. Choose a sunny spot, though an area with afternoon shade is ideal in extremely hot climates. A well-draining, even sandy or rocky soil for planting is best.

Consider planting in locations where rock soapwort can spill over walls, rock gardens, window boxes, or pots.

How to Plant

If direct-sowing, plant the seeds at a depth of approximately 1/8 inch. Ensure they are covered very lightly with soil. For optimal growth, space the seeds at a rate of two to three seeds per plant. After planting, water lightly to settle the seeds into the soil.

Alternatively, you can start your rock soapwort seeds indoors and later transplant them to your garden. Begin indoor seeding well in advance of the growing season, typically in late winter or early spring. Plant the seeds in containers or trays filled with well-draining potting soil. Cover the seeds lightly, aiming for a depth of approximately 1/8 inch. Keep the soil consistently moist until germination occurs, which can take anywhere from 14 to 35 days.

When transplanting or thinning seedlings, ensure a spacing of approximately 12 inches between each rock soapwort plant. This spacing allows for healthy growth and proper air circulation.

How to Care for Soapwort

After it is established, rock soapwort requires little care. Upon initial transplantation, soapwort requires regular watering; however, once it has established itself, this drought-tolerant plant thrives with weekly watering during the summer, ensuring optimal bloom production. During the fall, trim back the plant once it has ceased blooming to achieve a neater appearance and reduce the chances of reseeding.