

Perennial Creeping Sedums

If you're looking for a beautiful plant that thrives on neglect, creeping sedum may be just the thing. There are few plants more forgiving of sun and bad soil. They are easy to grow and there is a large variety of shapes and forms to choose from. Many of these creeping sedums stay under 6". They are easy, frost-hardy plants that thrive outdoors with ample sun and great drainage. Overwatering will be the death of them. The genus *Sedums* includes more than 400 species of succulent annuals, perennials, biennials, subshrubs and shrubs native to the Northern Hemisphere. They have fleshy leaves that store water for up to 3 months during droughts and their colors change though out the seasons. Leaves range in color from green to blue-gray to reddish bronze. The leaves of evergreen species turn shades of red and russet in winter. During the growing season they will flower in blooms of pink, white and yellow.

They are great in containers, rock gardens, cracks of garden walls and walkways, roof tops, slopes, edging, and under massive trees. When planted in the ground they will spread easily and will fill the available space with a lush carpet that is easy to maintain. Although sedums are rapid spreaders, they are not invasive. Because they are shallow rooted, they can be easily lifted and moved. They can also be planted in containers with drainage holes. When planting in containers, mix 50% coarse sand, pumice or perlite into the soil to prevent rot. And they will overwinter in most planters—provided there is ample drainage—and emerge from dormancy in early to mid-spring. Once established, sedums can tolerate several months of drought. They are easy to propagate by hand; cut of the top 2" of a stem and transplant into moist sandy soil.

Sedums do best in full sun, though some will tolerate part sun. Soil should be well draining and they will thrive in shallow, lean and sandy soil. Fertilizer is not needed. Once established, plants will not need supplemental watering. Most hardy sedums are hardy to zone 5 with a few hardy to zone 4.

Creeping sedums may develop dead areas in the center of the plant with the active growth being on the edges. They can root along the stems, so to divide, preferably in the spring, dig up the whole plant, cut in half and reset one half of the plant back in the same hole. It will quickly regrow to fill in the blank areas. The other half can be cut into sections and planted. Sedums are relatively trouble free plants if the soil is well drained and not too fertile. Rich, wet soil will lead to crown and stem rot.

There many virtues include; reliability, lack of fussiness, succulent leaves, long blooming cycles, attracts butterflies, and in many cases, year-round interest. What's not to love?

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