

# HEARTLEAF ICE PLANT

## *Mesembryanthemum cordifolium*



### Characteristics

- Type: Succulent
- Zone: 10 to 11
- Height: 4"- 6"
- Spread: 12"- 24"
- Bloom Time: May to September
- Blooms: Red, Pink, or Yellow
- Sun: Full sun
- Water: Dry to medium
- Maintenance: Low
- Suggested Use: Annual
- Flower: Showy

### Culture

Ideal ground covers for both drought tolerant and tropical gardens. Provides bright green foliage and small red, yellow, or pink flowers. Extremely hardy, tolerating a wide range of waterings and temperatures. This ground cover, like most succulent ground covers, doesn't appreciate foot traffic, but does thrive on neglect. They require little to no maintenance, feed them once during the growing season, and watch them inhabit some of the worst soil.

### Noteworthy Characteristics

*Mesembryanthemum cordifolium*, commonly called heartleaf ice plant, is a succulent, creeping, short-lived, mat-forming perennial that is native to the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. It has escaped gardens and naturalized in some parts of California, Oregon and Florida. Plants only rise to about 4" tall with prostrate stems trailing along the ground to 2' long. Stems are clad with smooth, heart-shaped, fleshy, oval, bright green leaves to 1" wide. Solitary, many-petaled flowers to 1" from the leaf axils are pink with yellow stamens. Flowers love the sun, but close up at night and remain closed on cloudy days. Flowers bloom primarily from spring to fall. Formerly known as *Aptenia cordifolia*.

### Problems

No serious insect or disease problems. Too much soil moisture combined with poorly-drained soils may lead to the onset of root rot.

### Garden Uses

In USDA Zones 10-11, heartleaf ice plant serves as an excellent bedding plant or ground cover for rock gardens or small garden areas. Where not winter hardy, grow as an annual in the ground or in containers and hanging baskets. It is a unique, trailing succulent that can be grown in sun or shade. For colder regions, it can be grown as an annual ground cover or over-wintered in a sunny window or heated greenhouse.

Courtesy of Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Finder