

# 'MUTABILIS' ROSE

*Rosa 'Mutabilis'*



## Characteristics

- Type: Shrub
- Zone: 6 to 9
- Height: 3-6 feet
- Spread: 2-5 feet
- Blooms: Yellow to orange to pink to red
- Blooms: May to frost
- Flower: Showy, Fragrant
- Sun: Full sun
- Water: Medium
- Maintenance: Medium
- Attracts: Butterflies
- Earth-Kind® Rose

## Culture

'Mutabilis', a China rose, is a rounded, repeat-blooming, old garden shrub rose which grows 3-6' tall (typically to 3' in northern climates and taller in southern climates). Features clusters of slightly fragrant, single flowers (3" diameter) which bloom in May and repeat throughout the summer into fall. Flowers change color (mutate as the cultivar name suggests) as they mature, opening yellow and changing to orange, pink and finally deep pinkish-red. Thus, a shrub in full bloom will feature a wide spectrum of flower colors. Medium green foliage and red stems. Orange hips will form if spent flowers are not deadheaded. Sometimes called butterfly rose because of the purported resemblance of the open flowers to butterflies. Synonymous with and formerly known as *Rosa chinensis* 'Mutabilis'

## Noteworthy Characteristics

'Mutabilis' was introduced prior to 1894 and is one of the most famous and beloved of the old garden roses. Amazing medium sized single blossoms that pass through three distinct color phases (hence the name 'Mutabilis, since the blooms "mutate" in color) beginning with yellow, changing to pink, and finally to crimson. 'Mutabilis' is also known as "The Butterfly Rose" because its blossoms look like brightly colored butterflies that have landed on the bush. Named 2005 "Earth-Kind® Rose of the Year" by Texas AgriLife Extension Service, this is a large, attractive shrub that is supremely easy to grow and has great heat tolerance making it well suited for growing in the South. Be sure to give it plenty of room to grow. Can also be pruned to form a spectacular rose tree 8' to 10' in height. Earth-Kind® is a special designation given to select rose cultivars by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service through the Earth-Kind® landscaping program. It is based on the results of extensive research and field trials and is awarded only to those roses demonstrating superior pest tolerance, combined with outstanding landscape performance. Earth-Kind® roses do well in a variety of soil types, ranging from well-drained acid sands to poorly aerated, highly alkaline clays. Once established, these select cultivars also have excellent heat and drought tolerance.

## Problems

Black spot, powdery mildew, rust and rose rosette. Potential insect problems include aphids, beetles, borers, scale, thrips, rose midges, leafhoppers and spider mites. This China rose has good disease resistance, however.

## Garden Uses

Grow as a specimen or in small groups in borders, cottage gardens, foundations or rose gardens. Also effective as a hedge.