

Opuntia humifusa

Eastern Prickly Pear



Plant type:

Perennial Cactus

Season of Interest:

All year

Height: 1-3'

Spread: 1-1.5'

Water needs:

Low

Native Region:

CO, KS, NE, NM, OK, TX

Elevation:

up to 8,000'

Important to know:

Fruits are red. Roots need to be dry during winter to prevent rot, so well-drained soil is a must



Maintenance: Low

Garden uses: Banks, Slopes, Beds and Borders

Habitat: Dry open areas including roadsides, rocky areas

Ease of Propagation: Medium

Propagation: Propagated from woody stem cuttings or seed. Opuntias germinate more effectively the 2nd year after harvest. Soak/ferment the fruit for several days to soften the flesh around the seeds. The chemical action of bacteria, yeasts or other microorganisms breaks down the soft flesh. Do not change the water, let it roil. Eventually you can lift and discard the skin with glochids. Again, use tongs. Rub the remaining seeds and pulp on a sieve under running water to separate the seeds which are about half a cm. in size. Dry the seeds on a paper towel in a warm place for a week or two until completely dry. Store dry at 40°F.

