

WILD DAGGA



Leonotis leonurus

Wild Dagga/Wilde Dagga

PLANT TYPE: PERENNIAL, SHRUB
SA DISTRIBUTION: EASTERN CAPE, KWAZULU-NATAL,
LIMPOPO, MPUMALANGA, WESTERN CAPE
SOIL TYPE: SANDY, CLAY, LOAM
FLOWERING SEASON: LATE SUMMER, AUTUMN,
SPORADIC/ALL YEAR
PH: NEUTRAL
FLOWER COLOUR: WHITE, CREAM, YELLOW, ORANGE
ASPECT: FULL SUN

Leonotis leonurus, commonly known as Wild Dagga, is a striking indigenous shrub known for its bright orange, tubular flowers and hardy nature. This versatile plant is a favorite among gardeners and wildlife enthusiasts alike, offering both visual appeal and ecological benefits.

WILDE DAGGA



Characteristics

Wild dagga (*Leonotis leonurus*), also known as Lion's Ear or Wild Cannabis (though not related to cannabis), is a robust and visually striking shrub native to South Africa. It typically grows up to 2–3 meters tall with a spread of 1.5–2 meters. The plant features long, narrow, lance-shaped leaves with serrated edges; these are dark green on the upper side and lighter underneath.

Its bright orange tubular flowers, which occasionally appear in white or pale yellow varieties, grow in distinctive whorled clusters along the stems and bloom from late summer to autumn. The upright stems are woody at the base and herbaceous near the tips, with a slightly rough texture due to fine hairs.

WILD DAGGA



Why the Wild Dagga?

Wild Dagga plays an important ecological role by attracting pollinators such as sunbirds, bees, and butterflies with its nectar-rich flowers. It is also drought-tolerant, thriving in arid and semi-arid conditions. This makes it an excellent choice for wildlife-friendly, water-wise landscaping in areas with high browsing pressure.

In addition, Wild Dagga has been used in traditional medicine to treat colds, fevers, skin conditions, and respiratory issues. Its vibrant flowers and structural form make it a popular choice for indigenous gardens and urban landscapes.

Environmentally, it promotes biodiversity, helps control erosion with its fibrous root system, and is well-suited for rehabilitating disturbed areas. This hardy, low-maintenance plant is ideal for sustainable landscaping, especially in regions like the Western Cape with similar climatic conditions.

WILDE DAGGA



The More You Know...

Leonotis leonurus is generally not considered highly palatable to most herbivores. This is largely due to the plant's aromatic leaves and bitter taste, which can deter browsing. However, some herbivores may nibble on it if other more desirable forage is unavailable, especially during times of drought or limited resources.

In a wildlife or garden setting like Outeniquasbosch Wildlife Village, *Leonotis leonurus* is a resilient and attractive choice for landscaping as it is both drought-tolerant and relatively resistant to grazing pressure, making it a low-maintenance plant in areas frequented by herbivores.