

Alkali Heath, Alkali sea-heath

Frankeniaceae

Frankenia salina



In the Garden

This native perennial rhizomatous herb, often called alkali heath or alkali seaheath is uncommon, even in the region where it is most likely to be found, just north of the San Francisco Bay Area. It is a squat flowering bush that grows to about 1-foot tall forming a twiggy thicket near beaches and salt marshes. Its common name refers to its preference for alkaline soils. It has the ability to excrete salt as an adaptation for living in saline habitats. The small flowers are white to purple-pink or fuchsia in color.

In its natural environment, this plant grows in salt marshes in clay loam soil, but also thrives in fresh water and in lighter soils. In the native garden, this plant is a great filler around a pond with its small, but colorful flowers.

Sun: Full sun to part shade

Water: Moderate, High

Soil: Clay, Loam, Sand

Other: Attracts Birds, Erosion Control

Ecological Value:

Can grow in rather salty conditions and will exude salt. Good food source for large migratory waterfowl. It's rhizomatous behavior makes it good for stabilizing marshy areas.

Historical Uses:

No known historical uses.

Native Distribution:

Native to CA and HI.

Elevation:

0 and 2460 feet

Plant Communities:

Coastal Strand, Coastal Salt Marsh, Wetland-riparian

Habitat:

Salt marshes, beaches, alkali flats along or near the coast.

The Watershed Nursery
www.thewatershednursery.com