

Related Taxa to *Lobularia maritima*

Iberis sempervirens L.
(*Iberis garexiana*)

Candytuft

- This member of the Brassicaceae native to Southern Europe and Western Asia is alternately known as Edging Candytuft or Perennial Candytuft; at first glance, in bloom it looks very similar to *Lobularia maritima* with 1" to 1½" (2") wide hemispherical clusters of tiny, ⅝" diameter, white four-petal flowers; the two petals toward the exterior side of the cluster are about three times larger than the two petals toward the interior of the cluster resulting in a sort of micky mouse-eared appearance to individual flowers; the white obovate petals are subtended by tiny obovate to oblanceolate green bracts; flowers on the cluster periphery open first and the terminal inflorescence is held erect just above the foliage; flowering occurs primarily in late winter to early spring, declining as temperatures warm.
- Plants eventually form spreading 6" to 9" (12") tall mat-like circular clumps 1' to 2' wide which may root where stems contact the soil; older branches and the main stem become woody over time, while younger stems remain semi-woody to almost succulent; stems are initially glabrous and light green to yellowish green in color, eventually maturing to brownish gray at the base; the overall texture is medium to medium-fine; in areas where they grow vigorously, *I. sempervirens* can be used as a small scale groundcover, edging, or rock garden plant; it is sometimes used as a winter annual in hotter climates, although the growth tends to be rather slow for this purpose.
- Evergreen leaves are alternate and arranged radially around the stems; most of the leaves are ½" to 1" long, becoming much shorter and narrower on flower stalks; the sessile blades are narrowly lanceolate to linear, and glabrous dark lustrous green both above and beneath, except along the yellow-green main vein which is slightly depressed above and raised beneath; tips are rounded to broadly acute and bases are cuneate; the specific epithet means evergreen in reference to the foliage.
- Candytuft is hardy in USDA zones 4 through 8(9), but is less vigorous in the heat of zones 8 and 9a than in cooler climates; growth is slow in comparison to *L. maritima*, but it thrives in similar settings; full sun is best in cooler climates, while the warmer the climate, the more plants benefit from light filtered or afternoon shade; although this species is soil pH adaptable, soils should be well drained and not excessively high in nitrogen fertility as this encourages leggy growth; root rots due to improperly drained soil is the biggest disease problem; in southern regions, plants look best in winter and spring, while in northern areas they look most vigorous in spring to summer; periodic pruning may be necessary to maintain canopy density; the genus name means from Iberia.