For the joy of gardening!
Estabrook's

SWAMP ROSE CARE

LIGHT

Swamp rose (Rosa palustris) prefers full sun and an open, airy site, with partial shade tolerated. Give its upright to arching shrub form room to spread. It suits moist naturalized borders and wetland edges better than a dry, paved planting strip. Allow access for selective pruning without crowding neighboring plants.

WATER

Keep the root area consistently moist, especially during establishment and dry spells. Swamp rose tolerates seasonal wetness and flooding better than many garden roses, but do not assume it wants permanent deep standing water. Water at soil level and check the actual root ball even when nearby soil appears damp.

SOIL & PLANTING

Use acidic, organically rich, moisture-retentive soil. Set the plant at the nursery level and mulch lightly away from canes. Avoid compacting the root area or repeatedly digging through spreading roots. Choose a site with reliable moisture rather than trying to maintain a wet hole within otherwise unsuitable ground.

FEEDING

Heavy feeding is seldom needed in a suitable site. Use a soil test to guide nutrients and avoid automatic lime applications. If fertilizer is necessary, apply modestly in spring according to the label. Correct poor moisture conditions or root injury before trying to stimulate the plant with extra nitrogen.

SEASONAL CARE

Prune selectively to remove damaged, weak, or congested canes and retain an open natural form. Avoid hard annual cutting when flowers and hips are priorities. Manage unwanted suckers as they appear. Preserve healthy older framework where possible rather than treating this native species as a compact modern bedding rose.

HELPFUL TIPS

Pink summer flowers followed by hips and arching prickly stems are characteristic. This species has wetter-site needs than Carolina or Virginia roses and should retain its own guide. Good air circulation helps foliage health; inspect for pests and leaf disease if vigor declines despite adequate moisture.