HOARY WILLOW CARE

LIGHT

Hoary willow (Salix eleagnos, also written elaeagnos) prefers an open, sunny site. It forms a broad shrub or small tree rather than a tiny silver groundcover. Allow room for its mature branching and avoid deep shade or dense competition from neighboring shrubs. Choose a site with dependable root moisture.

WATER

Water slowly through the root ball and surrounding soil after planting. Check moisture regularly and water deeply when needed, keeping roots consistently moist during establishment. Adjust for rain, weather, and soil conditions rather than a fixed daily schedule. A new root ball can dry out even beside damp ground.

SOIL & PLANTING

Plant with the root flare at or slightly above the surrounding ground level. Keep any graft union above soil. Mulch lightly across the root zone without touching stems. Protect roots from compaction, lawn equipment, and repeated digging. Leave room for the plant's mature spread rather than relying on repeated hard cutting.

FEEDING

Use a soil test to guide fertilizer and pH changes. Healthy willows may need little feeding. If nutrients are needed, apply a modest spring dose of tree or shrub fertilizer at the label rate. Avoid heavy nitrogen and late-season feeding; fertilizer cannot correct poor siting or damaged roots.

SEASONAL CARE

Preserve the natural shrub or small-tree framework with selective pruning. Remove dead, damaged, or crowded growth; if shaping is needed, work after the catkin display. Plan any regular renewal while the plant is young instead of repeatedly removing large limbs from an established tree. Manage unwanted shoots before they become oversized.

HELPFUL TIPS

Narrow leaves with pale or hairy undersides are characteristic. The silver appearance does not mean a newly planted willow can be left to dry out. Keep it clear of small drains and confined paving. Investigate progressive dieback or damaged stems before adding nutrients or applying a pesticide.