

Plants of
The Burnett Honors College
Meditation Garden
An Annotated Guide



Compiled by

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2024

The University of Central Florida



In Appreciation

Dean Sheila Amin Gutiérrez de Piñeres

Who made it all possible—again



The Contributors

Allyn MacLean Stearman is UCF Professor Emerita of Anthropology and the Founding Dean of the Burnett Honors College. She received her BA in Spanish Language and Literature with a minor in Studio Art from the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1964. Dr. Stearman served in the Bolivian Amazon as a Peace Corps Volunteer from 1964-1967, working in rural community development. Following her Peace Corps service, she began graduate studies at the University of Florida in Anthropology and received her PhD in 1976 with specializations in Latin American Studies and Cultural Ecology. She began teaching at UCF in 1975 while still a graduate student in what is now the Department of Anthropology. In 1996, she became the Director of the University Honors Program and then in 2000, the first Dean of the new Burnett Honors College, where she served until 2004. She retired from UCF in 2008. In the summer of 2023, Dr. Stearman returned to UCF as a volunteer, working with students to renovate the Burnett Honors College Meditation Garden, which she established in 2002 during the construction of the Burnett Honors College building.

Isabel Escardo-Boomsma is a UCF Environmental Studies Senior on the science track graduating Fall of 2024. Over the course of four years, she has had the opportunity to work at the Arboretum as an Urban Horticulture Intern. She first began working at the Burnett Honors College Garden while interning for the Arboretum and with her loyalty and dedication to the garden and Dr. Stearman's recognition of her skills, she soon earned a paying position. She also interned for *Ideas for Us-Fleet Farming*, which is an urban agriculture program that brings food harvesting closer to home and increases local food accessibility. She loves the environment and learning how she can personally and professionally improve the relationship between humans and the Earth. She has always had a fondness for gardening and isn't afraid to get her hands dirty. As a kid she could always be found gardening with her mother or just spending time outside. After graduation, she plans to work outdoors as much as she can in Conservation Corps and will start her career working as an Environmental Scientist/Specialist.

Christian González is a Senior at UCF, nearing the completion of his General Biology degree, with aspirations of a career in Dentistry. Christian served in the US Army, where he achieved the rank of non-commissioned officer. During his deployment to the Middle East as part of a Behavioral Health Unit, he managed over 400 cases, earning an Army Commendation Medal for his commitment to assisting fellow soldiers. In his final term before retiring from the Army, Christian volunteered for a joint-service relief mission in Louisiana. His exceptional performance in data gathering and raising awareness about critical community issues such as illiteracy, poverty, and lack of transportation to medical services, earned him another Army Commendation Medal and recognition as IRT (Innovative Readiness Training)'s Best Warrior from the Air Force, Navy, and Marines. Currently, he serves as Secretary for UCF's Friends in Science, which he co-founded, and plans to transition to the role of Behavioral Health Advisor after graduation. One of his most rewarding experiences at UCF has been working in the Burnett Honors College Meditation Garden, where he developed a passion for gardening, and hopes to take the knowledge and skills he learned to grow a garden of his own.



History of the Burnett Honors College Meditation Garden

Planning for the Burnett Honors College (BHC) building began in 2000 after UCF, through the efforts of President John C. Hitt, received a donation of \$1.5 million for its construction from Al and Nancy Burnett of Winter Park, Florida, after whom the building is named. Through a State of Florida program for higher education, this building grant was then matched by the State, for a total of three million dollars. Ground was broken on April 24, 2001, and construction was completed in May 2002. The building was formally dedicated on October 23, 2002.

During the initial planning stages, the Founding BHC Dean, Dr. Allyn Stearman, worked closely with the architects in developing the design for the building. It was conceived to meet Honors student and faculty needs, to provide them not only with academic space but also to give them a home on campus to meet, gather, and study. Because of her longstanding professional focus and interests in cultural ecology (how people interact with their environment), gardening, botany, and plant culture, Dr. Stearman proposed that the building also incorporate a walled garden that would provide a quiet and engaging space not only for Honors students and faculty, but for anyone on campus who would like to enjoy time there. Dr. Gary Whitehouse, UCF Provost at the time and an avid gardener, secured the \$60,000 in additional funding to make the garden possible.

Dr. Stearman worked with the building's landscape architect to design the garden and come up with a plan that would balance usable hardscape with planting areas. Two mature Live Oak trees were to be set at either end of the garden, of which only one currently exists, now well-grown and mature. The selection of the two trees required a day-long trip to a tree farm in north Florida, where Stearman and the owner walked over several acres before choosing the matched pair of specimen oaks. They were transported to UCF on a large truck with a flatbed trailer and covered with a tarp to protect them during their journey south. A crane had been rented and awaited their arrival. The crane, parked out in the long-leaf pines and palmettos that surrounded the building site at the time, then flew the trees over the brick garden wall and into two deep pre-dug holes filled with water. Later, hardscaping was added to surround the trees. Unfortunately, the landscape architect had unknowingly planned to put in pavers, which are commonly laid on a base of crushed lime rock, around the oak at the west end of the garden. Oaks are lovers of acid soils, and although it took several years, the oak failed to thrive in the highly alkaline paver base, and it eventually had to be removed. The surviving tree on the east end of the garden was surrounded with concrete, laid over the existing soil, and is now a healthy and beautiful focal point in the garden. The damaged oak was replaced by a Mule Palm, which has better adapted to the poor soil conditions although it suffers from an underdeveloped canopy of fronds.

In 2008 Dr. Stearman retired from UCF, to be succeeded by Dean Alvin Wang, who introduced a koi pond to the southeast corner of the garden, enhancing this space and giving the garden an additional element of serenity and beauty. The koi are healthy and reproducing, cared for by Herlinda Bedoya, the long-serving BHC Custodian, and attract many visitors to the garden every day. The pond is shaded by the remaining large Live Oak and an herbaceous Samoan Sunshine tree opposite.

Around 2010, the university began to experience significant budget cuts, leading to a loss of personnel, and the wellbeing of the BHC garden began to decline. Decisions were made to remove most of the original plantings, replacing them with native, drought resistant plant material deemed to need less care. Species with invasive tendencies such as bromeliads and heliconia gradually took over large areas of the garden, and sections with woody shrubs became severely overgrown, not entirely negatively affecting the garden's general appearance, but creating a densely constricted space with little plant diversity, color, or visual interest.

In early August 2023, Dr. Stearman contacted the current BHC Dean, Dr. Sheila Amin Gutiérrez de Piñeres, about the possibility of volunteering to rehabilitate the BHC garden to the vision she created when designing the building. She had spent the first years of her retirement living in lowland Bolivia, where she and her husband, Michael Stearman, had been Peace Corps Volunteers in the 1960s, and where Dr. Stearman had continued to work as an anthropologist throughout her 33-year career at UCF. She and her husband had recently returned to the UCF area and had moved into a new retirement community, Legacy Pointe at UCF. Dean Sheila readily agreed to Dr. Stearman's offer of assistance.

Dr. Stearman began by removing large areas of the overgrown vegetation, mostly by hand, but also having to request occasional assistance from UCF's Landscape Operations, which provided a backhoe small enough to enter the garden. She worked one section of the garden at a time, removing undesirable plants or severely pruning them, turning the soil, and then replanting with new material. The great majority of the new plantings were purchased from Lukas Nursery, located in Slavia, near the UCF campus, and where Dr. Stearman had first met the owner, Phil Lukas, soon after the nursery was established in 1976. The garden's original plant material was also sourced through Lukas Nursery. A complete set of garden tools and other inputs and necessities also had to be acquired. During this period, Dr. Stearman had assistance from BHC students such as Michael Golden, and from several volunteers provided by the UCF Arboretum. Especially notable among the Arboretum student volunteers was Isabel Escardo-Boomsma, a young woman who arrived with a good deal of plant experience and who worked tirelessly and consistently alongside Dr. Stearman. During the 2024 Summer B Term, they were joined by student intern, Christian González. The rehabilitation stage culminated in late spring, 2024, and the garden entered one of sustained maintenance.

Dr. Stearman and her UCF student assistants continue to tend the garden several times a week, updating and refreshing the planted areas with seasonal color, and carrying out the many tasks that a well-cared-for garden requires: weeding, pruning, fertilizing, and maintaining a culture of attentiveness.



**The Burnett Honors College
Meditation Garden
Purpose, Design, and Cultural Derivations**

The idea to create a Meditation Garden in 2002 as an extension of the newly completed Burnett Honors College building grew from the belief that students, faculty, and others who spend significant time at UCF, mostly in closed, indoor spaces, would appreciate and benefit from having a tranquil, reflective outdoor retreat that a garden can provide. The later addition of a koi pond further enhanced the beauty of this space, and over the ensuing years, the Meditation Garden has become well-known and loved by the campus community as a special place to spend a few quiet moments. It also receives frequent visits from local people as well as those coming from other regions of the state and country, often looking at UCF as a prospective university to attend.

The Meditation Garden was not conceived to be a scientific botanical garden, with representations from a select group of plant families and their accompanying identification labels, which in the case of this garden, would be a distraction from the viewer's enjoyment. For this reason, among others, this *Plant Guide* was compiled to address some of these botanical omissions. Rather, the garden plan was loosely derived from a long history of garden cultures found throughout the world. Much of the concept was borrowed from the classic horticultural model of an English garden as envisioned by such well-known Old World landscape architects and gardeners as "Capability" Brown and Gertrude Jekyll; only to then be generously combined with a New World perspective in the ways of thinking about garden design, often taken from what is seen in natural landscapes, and that is best exemplified by the works of great American park and garden designers such as Frederick Law Olmstead and Beatrix Ferrand. But there are also many Asian influences in the Meditation Garden, such as found in the beautiful Koi Pond and the large bamboo stand that rims the garden's south wall; and those originating in the tropical regions of the world such as Central and South America, with their large, overarching plants bearing vivid green leaves and climbing vines that display clusters of flowers that inspire the imagination—and having the good fortune of being able to cultivate them here in the warm climate of Central Florida.

The plant selections and garden organizational plan reflect what can therefore be termed a "structured informality," with the meandering hardscape and dry-stone creek creating the underlying structure that forms distinct planting areas, or garden "rooms." These well-defined spaces have been casually filled with a broad plant selection, focusing on providing year-round color, achieved primarily through a concentration of flowering plants but also including those that are non-flowering or have small, cryptic blooms, and that instead offer patterned, varied-colored leaves, or visual interest provided by unusual leaf shape or distinctive growth habits.

The Meditation Garden continues to change and evolve, as do all living things. It responds to seasonal variations in light, temperature, and humidity. It is affected both positively and negatively by people, birds, squirrels, possums, insects, fungus, snails and slugs, and all the other denizens of nature that visit or inhabit it. Some plants will thrive while others will fail, often for no discernable reason. Some simply reach their end time and are then replaced with a like kind, or perhaps by some new, more interesting, or even rare specimen for the visitor to contemplate and enjoy.



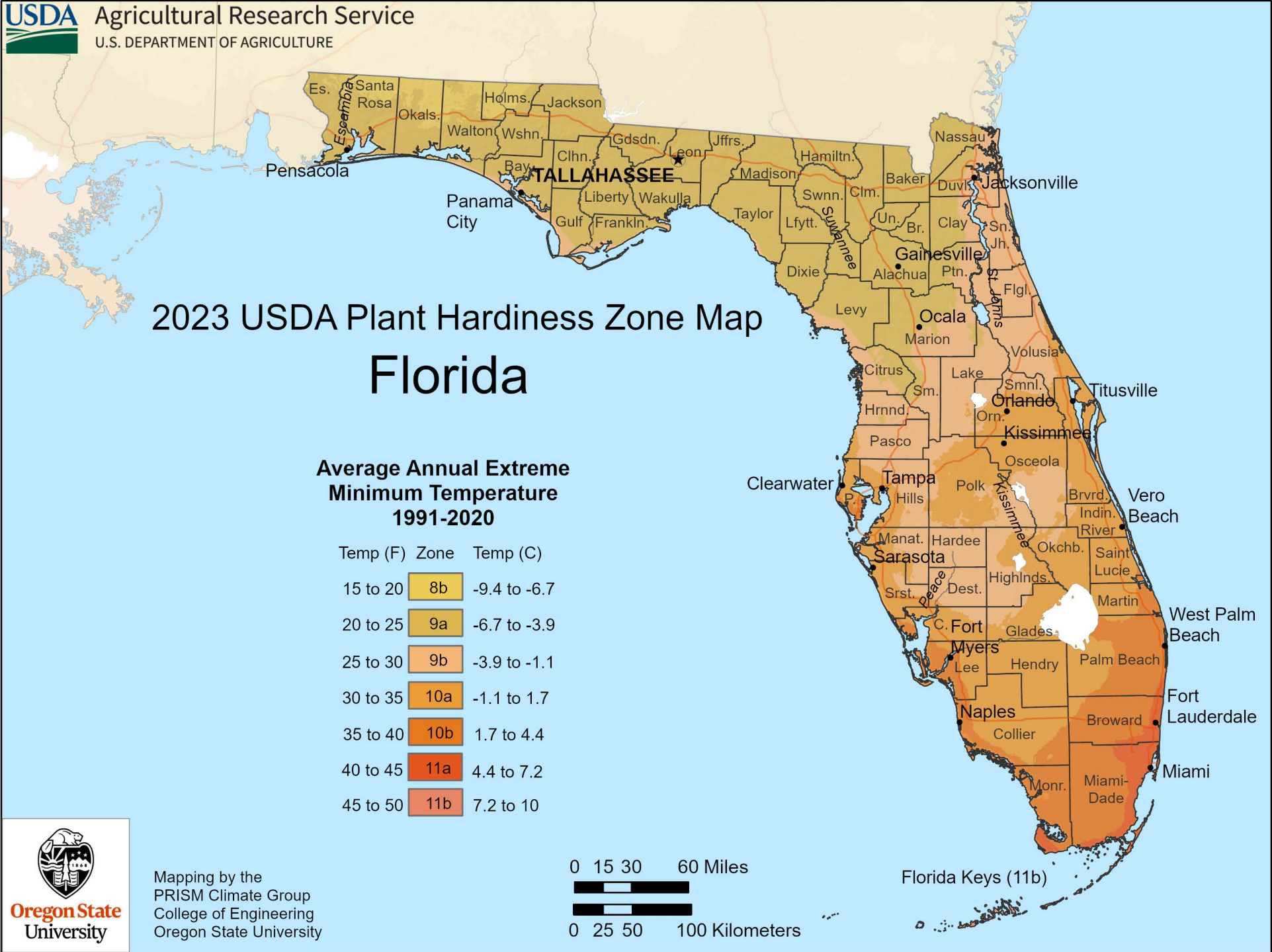
PLANTS OF
THE BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE
MEDITATION GARDEN

USDA CLIMATE ZONE STATEMENT

WASHINGTON, DC, Nov. 15, 2023—The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today released a new version of its Plant Hardiness Zone Map (PHZM), updating this valuable tool for gardeners and researchers for the first time since 2012. USDA's Plant Hardiness Zone Map is the standard by which gardeners and growers can determine which plants are most likely to thrive at a location. The new map—jointly developed by USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Oregon State University's (OSU) PRISM Climate Group—is more accurate and contains greater detail than prior versions. It is available online at <https://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/>.

Although a paper version of the 2023 map will not be available for purchase from the government, anyone may download the new map free of charge and print copies as needed.

New temperature research shows that more of Central Florida now may not get as cold as in previous decades. Orlando and most of Orange County *moved from hardiness zone 9b to 10a — about a quarter zone warmer than before.*



2023 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map Florida

Average Annual Extreme Minimum Temperature 1991-2020

Temp (F)	Zone	Temp (C)
15 to 20	8b	-9.4 to -6.7
20 to 25	9a	-6.7 to -3.9
25 to 30	9b	-3.9 to -1.1
30 to 35	10a	-1.1 to 1.7
35 to 40	10b	1.7 to 4.4
40 to 45	11a	4.4 to 7.2
45 to 50	11b	7.2 to 10



Florida Keys (11b)



Mapping by the
PRISM Climate Group
College of Engineering
Oregon State University

Burnett Honors College Meditation Garden
(Established 2002)
Master Plant List

After an absence of 20 years following her retirement as the Founding Dean of the Burnett Honors College, Dr. Allyn Stearman returned to UCF as a volunteer to begin a major renovation of the BHC Meditation Garden on August 1, 2023. The following list is the *Master Plant List* for the garden. It consists of two initial lists she compiled during the renovation process: 1) The *Original Plant List*, which comprises those plants previously existing in the garden and that were retained during the renovation. Dr. Stearman carried out an inventory of these plants on September 17, 2023; and 2) The *New Plant List*, which comprises the plant material that was added to the garden between August 1, 2023, and June 15, 2024, when the major replanting was completed. These two plant lists were then interfiled to form the *Master Plant List* that appears below. To accommodate new plant species acquired after June 15, 2024, an *Addendum* was created that immediately follows this *Master Plant List* and is updated as necessary.

Common Name	Scientific Name
1. African Daisy	<i>Gazania</i> spp.
2. Agapanthus ‘Sky Blue’	<i>Agapanthus africanus</i>
3. Agapanthus ‘dwarf’	<i>Agapanthus africanus</i>
4. Ajuga ‘Burgundy Glow’	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>
5. Allamanda (purple)	<i>Allamanda blanchetii</i>
6. Aloe	<i>Aloe vera</i>
7. Alyssum	<i>Lobularia maritima</i>
8. Angel Flower (butterfly bush)	<i>Buddleia</i> spp.
9. Angelonia	<i>Angelonia angustifolia</i>
10. Anthurium	<i>Anthurium andraeanum</i>
11. Asian Jasmine ‘Snow Cap’	<i>Trachelosperum asiatica</i> ‘Snow Cap’
12. Azalea ‘Autumn Twist’	<i>Rhododendron indicum</i>
13. Azalea (various)	<i>Rhododendron indicum</i>
14. Bacopa (white)	<i>Bacopa monnieri</i>
15. Bee Blossum	<i>Gaura lindheimeri</i>
16. Bidens	<i>Bidens ferfulifolia</i>
17. Bird of Paradise ‘Orange’ (small)	<i>Strelitzia reginae</i>
18. Bird of Paradise (Giant)	<i>Strelitzia nicolai</i>
19. Bleeding Heart	<i>Clerodendrum thomsoniae</i>
20. Blue Daze ‘Blue My Mind’	<i>Evolvulus glomeratus</i> hybrid
21. Blue Sage	<i>Salvia azura</i>
22. Brush Cherry (Eugenia topiary)	<i>Syzygium paniculatum</i> (formerly <i>Eugenia myrtifolia</i>)
23. Butterfly Bush ‘Miss Violet’	<i>Buddleja</i> ‘Miss Violet’
24. Caladium (various)	<i>Caladium</i> spp.
25. Calamus; Sweet Flag	<i>Acorus calamus</i>
26. Camellia (various)	<i>Camellia japonica</i>
27. Canna Lily	<i>Canna indica</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
28. Celosia	<i>Celosia spicata</i>
29. Chinese Timber Bamboo	<i>Phyllostachys vivax</i>
30. Coleus (varied)	<i>Plectranthus scutellarioides</i>
31. Confederate Jasmine	<i>Trachelospermum jasminoides</i>
32. Coontie; Cardboard Palm	<i>Zamia integrifolia</i>
33. Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis verticillata</i>
34. Cosmos	<i>Cosmos bipinnatus</i>
35. Crinum Lily ‘Americum’	<i>Crinum Americanum</i>
36. Croton (various)	<i>Codiaeum variegatum</i>
37. Crown of Thorns ‘Pink Cadillac’	<i>Euphorbia milii</i>
38. Dianthus Pink ‘Firewitch’	<i>Dianthus</i> spp.
39. Dorotheanthus ‘Mezoo Red’	<i>Dorotheanthus bellidiformis</i>
40. Drift Rose	<i>Rosa multiflora</i>
41. Duck Potato	<i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>
42. Duranta ‘Gold Mound’	<i>Duranta erecta</i>
43. Dusty Miller (silver ragwort)	<i>Senecio cineraria</i> (<i>Jacobaea Maritima</i>)
44. Dwarf bamboo	<i>Bambusa multiplex</i>
45. Dwarf Foxtail (chenille plant)	<i>Acalypha hispida</i>
46. Echeveria succulent	<i>Echeveria subsessilis</i>
47. Elephant Ear (California)	<i>Allocasia ‘California’</i>
48. Fan Flower	<i>Scaevola aemula</i>
49. Fern ‘Foxtail’	<i>Asparagus densiflorus ‘Meyril’</i>
50. Firebush	<i>Hamelia patens</i>
51. Flaming Torch	<i>Billbergia pyramidalis</i>
52. Gardenia ‘Radicons Dwarf’	<i>Gardenia augusta ‘Radicons’</i>
53. Geranium	<i>Pelargonium</i> spp.
54. Ginger	<i>Zingiber officinale</i>
55. Golden Shower Tree	<i>Cassia fistula</i>
56. Golden Trumpet Tree (Tabebuia)	<i>Handroanthus chrysotrichus</i>
57. Gomphrena	<i>Gomphrena haageana</i>
58. Hawaiian Ti	<i>Cordyline fruticosa</i>
59. Helenium	<i>Helenium amarum</i>
60. Heliconia	<i>Heliconia</i> spp.
61. Herald’s Trumpet Vine	<i>Beaumontia grandiflora</i>
62. Holly (Yaupon) Dwarf	<i>Ilex vomitoria ‘Nana’</i>
63. Hibiscus (various)	<i>Hibiscus rosa sinensis</i>
64. Horsetail Reed	<i>Equisetum hyemale</i>
65. Hosta (Sun)	<i>Hosta</i> spp. ‘Sun’
66. Hydrangea ‘Endless Summer’	<i>Hydrangea macrophylla</i>
67. Ice Plant ‘Hottentot’	<i>Carpobrotus</i> spp.
68. Impatiens (varied)	<i>Impatiens</i> spp.
69. Iris ‘Apostle Walking’	<i>Neomarcia caerulea ‘Regina’</i>
70. Iris ‘Blue Flag’	<i>Iris virginica ‘Blue Flag’</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
71. Ixora 'Petite'	<i>Ixora coccinea</i>
72. Kalanchoe 'Red Lips'	<i>Kalanchoe thrysiflora</i>
73. Lantana	<i>Lantana camara</i>
74. Live Oak	<i>Quercus virginiana</i>
75. Lobelia	<i>Lobelia erinus</i>
76. Loropetalum 'Purple Pixie'	<i>Loropetalum chinense</i> var. <i>Rubrum</i>
77. Lysimachia 'Goldilocks'	<i>Lysimachia nummularia</i>
78. Marigold	<i>Tagetes</i> spp.
79. Melampodium	<i>Melampodium americanum</i>
80. Mondo Grass (Dwarf)	<i>Ophiopogon japonicus</i>
81. Monstera deliciosa	<i>Monstera deliciosa</i>
82. Muhly Grass (Pink)	<i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i>
83. Mule Palm	<i>Butia capitata</i> X <i>Syagris romanzoffiana</i>
84. Mussaenda Pretty Dwarf (yellow)	<i>Mussaenda lutia</i>
85. Orange (bitter)	<i>Citrus x aurantium</i>
86. Orchid	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> spp.
87. Orchid Tree (Magenta) (south building front)	<i>Bauhinia blakeana</i> 'Hong Kong'
88. Oyster Plant 'Tricolor'	<i>Phoeo spathacea</i> 'Tri-color'
89. Papyrus Dwarf 'Baby Tut'	<i>Cyperus papyrus</i>
90. Peace Lily	<i>Spathiphyllum</i> spp.
91. Peacock Ginger (Watermelon Plant)	<i>Kaempferia pulchra</i>
92. Pentas	<i>Pentas lanceolata</i>
93. Perennial Peanut 'Ecoturf'	<i>Arachis glabrata</i>
94. Petunia	<i>Petunia</i> spp.
95. Philodendron Brasil	<i>Philodendron hederaceum</i>
96. Pink Mist (pincushion flower)	<i>Scabiosa columbaria</i>
97. Pink Trumpet Tree (Tabebuia)	<i>Tabebuia rosa</i>
98. Prairie Gentian	<i>Lisianthus grandiflorum</i>
99. Prayer Plant 'Makoyana'	<i>Calathea</i> 'Makoyana'
100. Purple Beautyberry	<i>Callicarpa americana</i>
101. Purple Heart	<i>Tradescantia pallida purpurea</i>
102. Purple Queen's Wreath	<i>Petrea volubilis</i>
103. Purslane/Portulaca	<i>Portulaca oleracea</i>
104. Red Bay	<i>Persea borbonia</i>
105. Red Star Ti	<i>Cordyline australis</i>
106. Red Swamp Maple	<i>Acer rubrum</i>
107. Royal Poinciana (north building front)	<i>Delonix regia</i>
108. Salvia 'Sallyfun Deep Ocean Salvia'	<i>Salvia farinacea</i>
109. Salvia 'Mystic Spires Blue'	<i>Salvia haematodes</i>
110. Samoan Sunshine tree	<i>Erythrina variegata</i>
111. Sedum 'Lemon Coral'	<i>Sedum rupestre</i> 'Lemon Coral'
112. Selloum	<i>Thaumatococcus danianum</i>
113. Shell Ginger	<i>Alpinia zerumbet</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
114. Snake Plant; Mother-in-Law Tongue	<i>Draceana trifasciata</i> (<i>Sansevieria trifasciata</i>)
115. Snow Bush	<i>Breynia disticha</i>
116. Spiderplant	<i>Chlorophytum comosum</i>
117. Staghorn Fern	<i>Platynerium</i> spp.
118. Stromanthe	<i>Stromanthe sanguinea</i> ‘Triostar’
119. Swamp Fern	<i>Blechnum serrulatum</i>
120. Sweet Potato Vine	<i>Ipomoea batatas</i>
121. Tibouchina ‘Jules Dwarf’(Princess Flower)	<i>Tibouchina</i> spp.
122. Verbena	<i>Verbena officinalis</i>
123. Veronica ‘Moodyblues’	<i>Veronica officinalis</i>
124. Vinca	<i>Catharanthus roseus</i>
125. Yellow Alder (Buttercup)	<i>Turnera ulmifolia</i>
126. Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow	<i>Brunfelsia pauciflora</i>
127. Zinnia	<i>Zinnia</i> spp.

END

Go To Addendum



AFRICAN DAISY

(*Gazania* spp.)

Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: Coastal areas of southern Africa

Overview: These vibrant perennials, native to the coastal regions of southern Africa, are celebrated for their dazzling blooms and easy-going nature, making them a favorite among novice and seasoned gardeners alike.

General Characteristics and Care: African daisies are not arduous to take care of, they require little maintenance. They are known to be a popular choice for new gardeners.

Zones: 9-11. Ideal for USDA zones 9-11. Perennials in zones 10-11, annuals in zone 9 and below.

Exposure: Basking in full sun, these daisies demand at least 6 hours of direct sunlight daily. While they can tolerate some shade, it will reduce their floral display.

Soil: Plant African Daisies in well-draining soil. They adapt to various soil types but thrive in slightly acidic to neutral pH. Enhance heavy clay or sandy soils with organic matter like compost for better drainage and fertility.

Water: Water African daisies regularly, ensuring that the soil remains moist but not waterlogged. Overwatering can lead to root rot, while underwatering may cause stress and reduced flowering. Once established, these plants can tolerate occasional dry spells, but they will perform best with consistent moisture.

Fertilizer: Apply a balanced, slow-release fertilizer or organic compost to provide essential nutrients for healthy growth and flowering. Avoid over-fertilizing, as this can lead to excessive foliage growth.

Bloom Period: In cool summers, they bloom from spring to frost. In hot summers, they bloom from spring to early summer, pausing in hot, dry weather, and resuming in the fall.

Flower Color: African Daisies boast a stunning array of colors, including white, yellow, pink, purple, and blue, often featuring a contrasting darker blue or purple center.

Size: African Daisies typically grow to be 2-5 feet (0.5 to 1.5 m.) high.

Toxicity: African Daisies are non-toxic to both humans and animals, making them a safe choice for any garden.

Pruning: Lightly prune in early spring or late summer to maintain their shape and encourage bushier growth. Remove any dead or damaged stems and foliage as needed throughout the growing season.

Sources: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/gazania-rigens/>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gazania>.
<https://www.gardenia.net/guide/african-daisy-how-to-grow-and-care>; <https://plantaddicts.com/are-african-daisies-poisonous/>; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/african-daisy/african-daisies-osteospermum.htm>

AGAPANTHUS
(Agapanthus africanus)
Amaryllidaceae



Geographical Origin: South Africa

Overview: Agapanthus is a popular perennial that grows from a bulb-like rhizome and is a tough survivor of chronic drought. Their strappy evergreen or semi-evergreen leaves provide winter presence while purple, blue, or white flowers add summer color.

The Agapanthus genus consists of seven species that go by the common name Lily of the Nile or African Lily. It is native to dry outcroppings or moist mountain meadows.

General Characteristics and Care:

Zones: 6-11. Agapanthus will tolerate short frosts but should not go below 40 degrees to maintain attractive leaves. The plant will usually return in the spring if it dies back.

Exposure: Agapanthus needs full sun; in very hot climates, some afternoon shade (tends to sun scorch on the leaf tips).

Soil: Needs well-drained soils; prefers slightly acidic soils. pH 5.5-6.5.

Water: Prefers damp but not saturated soil during the establishment period; water regularly during periods of low rain and high temperatures.

Fertilizer: Apply a balanced fertilizer as growth starts in spring. Add a flowering fertilizer (higher P and K) in early fall when flower buds begin to develop below ground.

Bloom Period: Mid-summer to early fall.

Flower Color: Blue, purple, white.

Size: Plant base about 12"-18". The flower stems can grow up to 6' tall; dwarf types only grow up to 20".

Toxicity: *Agapanthus* plants are not true lilies, and so do not share their high level of toxicity. However, ingestion of the rhizomes and roots can cause minor illness that can escalate depending on the amount ingested. The sap from the leaves can also cause skin irritation.

Pruning: Some gardeners think the dried flower heads are attractive and provide winter interest. Other gardeners prefer to cut the spent flowers off, a process called *deadheading*, as soon as they begin to form seed. Doing so prevents plants from wasting energy on seed production and instead allows them to store up energy for next year's bloom. Remove withered or dry leaves.

Sources: <https://www.gardendesign.com/plants/agapanthus.html>;

<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-l-d&q=Agapanthus+pH>;

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/bulbs/agapanthus/cold-hardiness-of-agapanthus.htm>

AJUGA 'Burgundy Glow'
(*Ajuga reptans*)
Lamiaceae



Geographical Origin: Europe, the Caucasus, and Iran.

Overview: Ajuga are a low-growing, evergreen perennial ground cover ideal for shaded areas under large trees where grass struggles. Unlike many perennials cultivated solely for their blooms, Ajuga is cherished for its vibrant, year-round foliage.

General Characteristics and Care: To keep them healthy in hot and humid regions, make sure it has good air circulation to avoid crown rot. If the plants get too crowded, divide them. They spread by *stolons*, like nature's extension cords: they are horizontal stems that grow along the ground and produce new plants at their tips, helping the plant spread, and forming an attractive mat-like ground cover.

Zones: They thrive in zones 3 to 10.

Exposure: This plant is adaptable to various light conditions, thriving in full sun, partial shade, and full shade. In full sun, its foliage develops a rich, deep hue but may require more frequent watering. In partial to full shade, the foliage color may be less intense, but the plant needs less watering and maintenance.

Soil: Ajuga prefers well-drained soil and can handle poor soil conditions but not waterlogged soil. Enhance drainage with organic matter or grit if needed. It can grow in chalk, clay, loam, and sandy soils with acid, alkaline, or neutral pH levels.

Water: They prefer moist soil. Regular watering is crucial during dry periods to keep the soil consistently moist. Avoid overwatering to prevent root rot. Let the topsoil layer dry slightly.

Fertilizer: Feeding Ajuga in early spring with a balanced, slow-release fertilizer promotes robust growth and beautiful foliage.

Bloom Period: Ajuga is in full bloom in mid-late spring to early summer.

Flower Color: Whorls of tiny blue-violet, purple, pink, or white flowers on spikes create a striking display.

Size: They can grow to a height of 4 to 8 inches (10 to 20 cm).

Toxicity: Generally considered non-toxic to humans and animals, making it a safe choice for gardens accessible to pets and children.

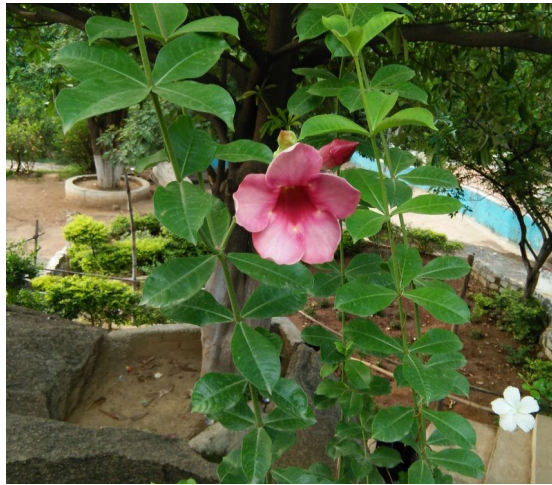
Pruning: Minimal pruning is needed for Ajuga. After flowering, mow or trim spent flower stalks to tidy the plant and encourage new growth.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ajuga_reptans; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/ajuga-reptans/>;
<https://missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=281384&isprofile=0>;
<https://www.gardenia.net/genus/ajuga-reptans-carpet-bugle>;
<https://www.waltersgardens.com/variety.php?ID=AJUBG>.

ALLAMANDA (PURPLE)

(*Allamanda blanchetii*)

Apocynaceae



Geographical Origin: Brazil

Overview: This evergreen tropical climber features stunning rose-purple trumpet flowers and is popular for its ornamental value in gardens and landscapes.

General Characteristics and Care: This is a perennial blooming plant. It is known for its large rose-purple trumpet blooms, measuring 7 to 10 cm wide, and is often grown as an ornamental plant. It can be cultivated as a vine or pruned into a dense shrub.

Zones: Allamanda thrives in USDA hardiness zones 9 to 11.

Exposure: This plant prefers full sun or light shade, which helps it produce abundant flowers and maintain healthy foliage.

Soil: Allamanda is healthy in richly organic, fertile, moist, and well-drained soils with a pH between 6 and 7.5. The plant does not tolerate drought or waterlogged conditions, so consistent soil moisture is crucial.

Water: They require much less frequent watering, but the soil should remain moist.

Fertilizer: Use organic mulch around the base and fertilize twice a month, especially in winter, to avoid fungal growth.

Bloom Period: Blooms during the summer and fall, providing long-lasting color and beauty to the garden.

Flower Color: Glossy, burgundy-brown buds open into flowers with five partially overlapping petals in a pink-cherry ice cream hue. The funnel-shaped bases are slightly darker, and the petals become more saturated in cool weather.

Size: Can grow up to 6-10 feet tall and wide (180-300 cm), making it a substantial addition to any garden. It will also climb a trellis if provided.

Toxicity: All parts of the plant are toxic if ingested, posing a risk to pets and children. Additionally, latex-like sap can irritate the skin, so handling with care is advised.

Pruning: Regular pruning helps maintain the plant's shape and encourages more prolific blooming. Remove seedpods to promote new growth and flowers. Prune in late winter or early spring to encourage a more compact habit and ensure a copious blooming season.

Sources: <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/allamanda-blanchetii/>;

https://toptropicals.com/catalog/uid/allamanda_cherry.htm; <https://housing.com/news/allamanda-blanchetii/>;

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allamanda_blanchetii;

<https://www.cabidigitallibrary.org/doi/full/10.1079/cabicrompendium.25980468>.

ALOE VERA

(*Aloe vera*)

Asphodelaceae



Geographical Origin: Arabian Peninsula

Overview: Aloe vera is a well-known succulent celebrated for its medicinal and cosmetic benefits. It is commonly grown as an ornamental plant and is prized for its gel, used in various health and beauty products.

General Characteristics and Care: Aloe vera features thick, fleshy green to grey-green leaves that fan out from the central stem, edged with small white teeth. This plant is easy to care for and thrives in warm, dry climates.

Zones: Aloe vera grown indoors can be moved outside during the summer; plants can be grown outside year-round in zones 8-11.

Exposure: They require full sun for at least six hours per day, but the best growth is found where they receive at least eight hours of bright light. The growing conditions for aloes vary in their native habitat.

Soil: Aloe vera prefers loose, gritty soil.

Water: Overwatering is a common mistake. Aloe vera prefers dry soil and should be watered sparingly. Water about once a week in warmer months and once every two weeks in winter. Let the soil dry completely before watering again.

Fertilizer: Fertilize sparingly (no more than once a month), and only in the spring and summer, with a balanced houseplant formula mixed at 1/2 strength.

Bloom Period: Aloe vera blooms rise from an inflorescence above the rosettes. Only mature plants (at least four years old) will bloom. Lack of flowers may be due to the plant's age or easily correctable cultural issues.

Flower Color: The flowers have tubular yellow and orange blooms dangling in a cluster atop a stiff flower stalk.

Size: Under normal household conditions, Aloe vera will mature to a height of about 2 feet.

Toxicity: Oral ingestion of aloe vera is potentially toxic.

Pruning: Pruning may become necessary as the plant matures. Many times, pups, or small, independent plants will begin forming next to the main portion of the plant. This is normal, but over time, the pups do grow, and will eventually make the overall size of the plant quite large, often overgrowing its container.

Sources: <https://www.fincacanarias.com/en/blog/news/how-to-recognise-the-aloe-vera-flower>; <https://www.epicgardening.com/aloe-vera-size>; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/houseplants/aloe-vera/flowering-aloe-vera-plants.htm>; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/houseplants/aloe-vera/growing-aloe-outdoors.htm>. <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/houseplants/aloe-vera/flowering-aloe-vera-plants.htm>.

ALYSSUM (SWEET ALYSSUM)

(*Lobularia maritima*)

Brassicaceae



Geographical Origin: The Mediterranean, Canary Islands, and Azores

Overview: This herbaceous plant in the mustard family (Brassicaceae) is commonly used as a bedding plant called alyssum or sweet alyssum and one standout feature of sweet alyssum is its delightful fragrance, which is most noticeable on warm days or in the evening.

General Characteristics and Care: Alyssum is nearly unmatched for ease of care. It tolerates cool temperatures. And though it may slow flowering during summer's heat, it bursts into bloom again when temperatures cool.

Zones: It is hardy in USDA zones 5-9 as an annual but can be a perennial in zones 9-11.

Exposure: Partial shade

Soil: Sweet alyssum plants prefer soil that is moist and well-draining. They're tolerant of many different planting locations and on sandy beaches and dunes. It can also grow on cultivated fields, walls, slopes, and even in cracks in sidewalks or walls. The plants will do poorly in boggy soil or where drainage is problematic.

Water: Provide your sweet alyssum plants with at least an inch of water every week, watering them more frequently during hot weather days or dry spells. If you plant your sweet alyssum in a stony landscape (or anywhere that dries out quickly), provide extra water.

Fertilizer: Requires low to moderate fertilization, using 100-150 ppm nitrogen weekly, alternating between potassium-balanced and calcium nitrate fertilizers.

Bloom Period: Sweet alyssum blooms from late spring through fall, often until the first frost.

Flower Color: Its charming flowers come in shades of white, pink, and purple.

Size: A compact beauty, it typically grows to 2-12 inches in height and spreads 8-12 inches wide.

Toxicity: *Lobularia maritima* is non-toxic to humans and pets.

Pruning: Regular deadheading or shearing by one-third keeps it blooming and looking neat. Some varieties re-seed easily, making it a garden staple.

Sources: <https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-grow-sweet-alyssum-1402862>;
<https://www.benary.com/products/lobularia-maritima-giga/giga-white-r3530u>;
<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.rorg/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a103>;
<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/lobularia-maritima/>; <https://www.gardenia.net/genus/lobularia-maritima-sweet-alyssum>; <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/sweet-alyssum-lobularia-maritima/>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobularia_maritima; Carl Lewis <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/lobularia-maritima/>

ANGEL FLOWER (Butterfly Bush)

(*Buddleja* spp.)
Scrophulariaceae



Geographical Origin: Asia, Africa, the Americas, and parts of Australasia.

Overview: The Angel Flower, commonly known as the Butterfly Bush, is celebrated for its vibrant, long panicles of flowers that attract butterflies and beneficial insects. Blooming from late spring to early autumn, its evergreen foliage and natural shape add year-round interest to any garden.

General Characteristics and Care: Butterfly bushes are mostly shrubs, with some species growing as trees. They feature lanceolate leaves and flowers in a range of colors, including pinks, blues, yellows, and reds, thriving best in full sun and well-drained soil.

Zones: Suitable for USDA hardiness zones 5-9. Regular pruning helps maintain their shape and encourages more prolific blooming.

Exposure: These plants require at least 8 hours of direct sunlight daily, even in warmer climates.

Soil: Prefers well-drained soil but is adaptable to various soil types, including poor soil.

Water: Once established, butterfly bushes are drought tolerant. Water deeply and slowly, adjusting for seasonal changes and avoiding overwatering.

Fertilizer: Fertilization is generally unnecessary unless the soil is poor. Use a 2-inch layer of compost or a general-purpose fertilizer if needed.

Bloom Period: Flowers from late spring through early autumn.

Flower Color: Depending on the species and cultivar, flowers can be violet, lavender, white, pink, red, or orange. The vibrant blooms make them stand out in any garden.

Size: Butterfly bushes grow from 6 to 12 feet (2-4 m.) tall with a spread of 4 to 15 feet (1-4.5 m.).

Toxicity: Butterfly bushes are non-toxic and safe for gardens with children, dogs, cats, and other animals. Their safety makes them an excellent choice for family gardens.

Pruning: Prune in early spring to prevent them from becoming too tall and to encourage more blooms.

Sources: <https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/butterfly-bush/>; <https://www.hgtv.com/outdoors/flowers-and-plants/trees-and-shrubs/how-to-care-for-butterfly-bushes>;
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/shrubs/butterfly-bush/butterfly-bush-care.htm>;
<https://www.longfield-gardens.com/article/all-about-buddleia/>

ANGELONIA
(Angelonia angustifolia)
Plantaginaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to North America, particularly Mexico and the West Indies.

Overview: Angelonia, often referred to as summer snapdragon, is a versatile and hardy perennial that brings vibrant color and delicate fragrance to gardens.

General Characteristics and Care: This tropical herbaceous perennial, noted for its small, snapdragon-like flowers, is upright, glabrous (smooth), and somewhat bushy. The foliage is slightly aromatic, and the plant blooms throughout the summer. Minimal care is needed, with regular watering and occasional deadheading. It is also relatively pest and disease resistant.

Zones: Suitable for USDA zones 9-11, occurring mainly in arid and semi-arid habitats.

Exposure: Angelonia thrives in full sun, requiring six to eight hours of direct sunlight for continuous blooming. Insufficient sunlight will result in tall, leggy growth with fewer blooms.

Soil: This plant tolerates various soils but prefers a pH of 5.5 to 6.2. Rich, organic soil reduces watering and fertilizing needs. Good drainage is essential to prevent root rot, and heavy clay soil should be amended (add compost and other more friable materials)

Water: Regular watering is necessary but avoid overwatering.

Fertilizer: Fertilize monthly with a light dose of flower fertilizer. At planting, apply a slow-release balanced fertilizer, followed by a liquid fertilizer every four weeks during the growing season to promote healthy growth and flowering.

Bloom Period: Flowers from late spring through early fall, offering a long-lasting display of vibrant colors.

Flower Color: Cultivars offer a palette of colors, including white, blue, light pink, and bicolor flowers, enhancing garden aesthetics.

Size: Typically reaches a height of 12 to 18 inches, making it suitable for various garden settings.

Toxicity: Angelonia is non-toxic, making it safe to plant around pets and children.

Pruning: Light pruning by pinching back the tips of the stems encourages a bushier growth habit and more branching, resulting in a fuller plant with increased blooms.

Sources: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/angelonia-angustifolia/>; <https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-grow-and-care-for-angelonia-4687127>;

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=287016>;

<https://www.lucasgreenhouses.com/plant/Angelonia-angustifolia-Archangel-White>;

<https://www.monrovia.com/archangel-summer-snapdragon.html>; <https://www.gardenia.net/guide/angelonia-plant-care-and-growing-guide>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angelonia>

ANTHURIUM
(Anthurium andraeanum)
Araceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Colombia and Ecuador.

Overview: Also known as Flamingo Flower or Laceleaf, Anthuriums are a recipient of the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit. This captivating houseplant is renowned for its vibrant heart-shaped flowers and glossy green leaves. Its exotic appearance and ease of care make it a popular choice among both novice and experienced gardeners.

General Characteristics and Care: Anthurium is a tropical evergreen perennial that thrives in bright, indirect light and high humidity. This plant boasts large, waxy, heart-shaped spathes with a spiky white flower at the center. The flowers are long-lasting, adding a stunning aesthetic to any interior.

Zones: Thrives in USDA hardiness zones 11-12, preferring temperatures between 65°F to 80°F (18°C to 27°C) with high humidity.

Exposure: Prefers bright indirect sunlight; avoid direct sun to prevent leaf scorch.

Soil: Use a peaty potting mixture with organic matter like compost or ground bark for better drainage.

Water: Keep soil moist but not waterlogged. Allow the top inch of soil to dry slightly between waterings.

Fertilizer: Fertilize with a high-phosphorus (P) fertilizer every two weeks during spring and summer.

Bloom Period: Typically blooms in summer, with flowers lasting eight weeks or longer. Can bloom year-round under ideal conditions.

Flower Color: Spathes range from red, pink, and orange to white, making it highly decorative. Each bloom lasts several weeks, and one plant can produce 4-6 flowers per year. Post-bloom, it may bear berry-like fruits with seeds, though this is rare indoors.

Size: It usually grows 12-18 inches tall (30-45 cm) and 10-12 inches wide (25-30 cm), creating an attractive display.

Toxicity: Toxic to pets and humans if ingested, irritating the mouth and gastrointestinal tract due to calcium oxalate crystals.

Pruning: Remove yellow or damaged leaves and faded flowers to encourage new growth and maintain a tidy appearance.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthurium_andraeanum; <https://www.almanac.com/plant/anthuriums>; <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/anthurium-andraeanum>; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/anthurium/>; <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/FP042>; <https://www.happysprout.com/indoor-plants/how-to-get-anthurium-to-bloom/>

ASIAN JASMINE 'Snow Cap'
(Trachelosperum asiatica 'Snow Cap')
Apocynaceae



Geographical Origin: Asia

Overview: Asiatic Jasmine is celebrated for its striking variegation and delightful summer fragrance. Its tricolor foliage starts pink, turns white, and then variegates into white and emerald, green. Summer brings clusters of fragrant white flowers, perfect for brightening shaded garden spots or cascading from containers.

General Characteristics and Care: *Trachelosperum asiatica* is a woody evergreen climber with glossy, leathery leaves and strongly scented cream-colored flowers in summer. Awarded the *Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit*, offering versatility for various climates.

Zones: It thrives in USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 7-9.

Exposure: This plant flourishes in full sun to partial sun, adapting well to different light conditions. It can handle varying amounts of sunlight, making it versatile for many garden settings.

Soil: Preferring moist, well-drained loamy soil, it tolerates various soil types including clay. It can withstand temporary flooding but dislikes constant soggy soil, and it grows well in soil with pH levels from acid to alkaline.

Water: Water when the top 2 inches of soil are dry to maintain optimal moisture levels without overwatering.

Fertilizer: Feed in early spring and late summer with slow-release shrub and tree fertilizer or organic plant food for robust growth and vibrant foliage.

Bloom Period: Blooms in summer, showcasing charming white flowers that add delightful fragrance and visual appeal.

Flower Color: Pristine white flowers contrast beautifully with the variegated foliage, providing striking visual appeal.

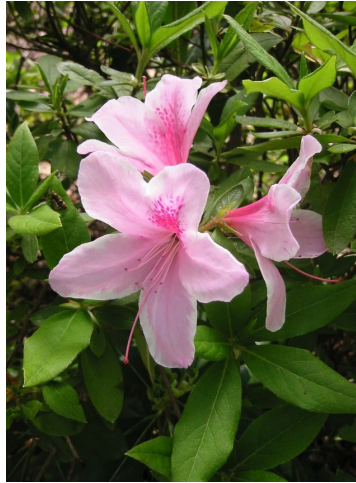
Size: Grows 6-10 inches tall and spreads 2-3 feet wide, rooting laterally. Compact size is ideal for ground cover or container planting.

Toxicity: Resistant to deer and rabbits, it also suppresses weed growth and is relatively free from diseases and pests, making it a low-maintenance option for gardeners.

Pruning: Essential to prevent overgrowth, especially in favorable conditions. Use a string trimmer or lawnmower with sharp blades for large areas to ensure clean cuts.

Sources: <https://www.thespruce.com/asiatic-jasmine-growing-guide-5225789>.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trachelosperum_asiaticum; <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/trachelosperum-asiaticum-snow-n-summer>; <https://www.gurneys.com/product/snow-n-summer-asiatic-jasmine>; https://www.etsy.com/market/asia_snow_jasmine.

AZALEA (VARIOUS)
(Rhododendron indicum)
Ericaceae



Geographical Origin: Japan

Overview: Azaleas are evergreen shrubs that can grow up to six feet tall in the wild. There are hundreds of azalea cultivars. They won the *Award of Merit in 1975 at the RHS Garden Wisley*.

General Characteristics and Care: Azaleas are popular ornamental plants in gardens and are also used in commercial cosmetic preparations. They are attractive shrubs with shiny, deep green leaves that hint of red during the winter.

Zones: Azaleas are suitable for USDA Zones 7 to 8.

Exposure: They prefer part shade or filtered partial sun and should be protected from prolonged direct exposure to spring and summer sun.

Soil: Azaleas grow best in acidic, humus-rich, medium moisture, moisture-retentive, but well-drained soils.

Water: Water them at the base to keep their leaves dry to minimize disease risk. For the first year, water the soil two inches deep twice per week; after establishment, they need less frequent watering and become drought tolerant.

Fertilizer: Feed azaleas every 20-30 days with a slow-acting organic fertilizer from early spring to late autumn. Apply chelated iron a couple of times a year and routinely provide micronutrients.

Bloom Period: They typically bloom from May to June, providing a vibrant display of color in the garden during these months.

Flower Color: They tend to have flowers that are in shades of yellow, pink, orange, red and white.

Size: Azaleas typically grow to 2-3 feet tall but under certain conditions can grow much taller.

Toxicity: All types and all parts of azalea bushes are considered poisonous. They contain toxins called grayanotoxins.

Pruning: Prune azaleas after the flowers drop off in late spring. This helps to maintain their shape and encourages bushier growth. Deadheading spent flowers helps direct the plant's energy into green growth but be careful not to pinch off next year's buds.

Sources: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/rhododendron-indicum/>;
<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=280025>;
<https://www.bonsai-bci.com/index.php/by-common-name/evergreen-flowering/512-rhododendron-indicum>;
<https://www.shootgardening.com/plants/rhododendron-indicum>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhododendron_indicum.

AZALEA 'AUTUMN TWIST'

(*Rhododendron indicum*)

Ericaceae



Geographical Origin: Japan

Overview: Azalea 'Autumn Twist' is a compact evergreen shrub that showcases stunning clusters of lightly scented purple trumpet-shaped flowers with white overtones and pink spots at the ends of the branches. These beautiful blooms appear from late spring to early fall. The plant has glossy, narrow leaves that remain dark green throughout the winter.

General Characteristics and Care: Azalea 'Autumn Twist' is an excellent choice for mass plantings or as a focal point in gardens due to its beautiful and continuous blooms. It thrives in rich, acidic soil and requires partial shade to full sun exposure.

Zones: Are suitable for USDA Zones 6a to 10b.

Exposure: This plant thrives in partial shade to full sun exposure.

Soil: Azalea 'Autumn Twist' prefers well-drained soil, whether it be loamy, sandy, or clay. The ideal soil pH range for this plant is between 5.0 to 6.5, which is strongly acidic to neutral.

Water: Avoid over-watering or planting in soil that stays wet. During the first year and summer, soak the soil two inches deep twice per week; once established, the plant becomes quite drought-tolerant and requires less frequent watering.

Fertilizer: Fertilize the Azalea 'Autumn Twist' after the spring bloom or during the summer months. However, avoid feeding the plant after August to prepare it for the dormant winter period.

Bloom Period: The Azalea 'Autumn Twist' blooms during mid-spring, late summer, early fall, and mid-fall.

Flower Color: Their flowers are predominantly white with striking purple spots.

Size: They grow to a height of 4.5 feet.

Toxicity: While Azalea 'Autumn Twist' is a beautiful addition to your garden, be aware that it's not safe to eat. If pets or people nibble on it, they might feel sick with nausea or stomach pain, and in rare cases, it can cause more serious health issues.

Pruning: If pruning is necessary, it should be done immediately after the spring flowering period.

Sources: <https://www.gardentags.com/plant-encyclopedia/rhododendron-indicum/27982;>

[https://encoreazalea.com/plant-care/video-watering-your-encore-azaleas/;](https://encoreazalea.com/plant-care/video-watering-your-encore-azaleas/)

[https://ideas4garden.com/plants/autumn-twist-encore-azalea/;](https://ideas4garden.com/plants/autumn-twist-encore-azalea/) <https://www.poison.org/articles/azaleas-and-rhododendrons;> [https://ideas4garden.com/plants/autumn-twist-encore-azalea/.](https://ideas4garden.com/plants/autumn-twist-encore-azalea/)

BACOPA (WHITE)
(Bacopa monnieri)
Plantaginaceae



Geographical Origin: Southern and eastern India, Australia, Europe, Africa, Asia, and both North and South America.

Overview: Bacopa, also known as Brahmi, is a perennial creeping herb used in Ayurvedic (Indian) traditional medicine. It is believed to improve memory and treat various ailments.

General Characteristics and Care: They have soft hairy stems and bright green oval succulent leaves. The small white flowers have yellow centers. This plant is completely edible and is often used in medicinal preparations, such as teas, oils, and pastes. They are known to treat a wide range of ailments, including respiratory and stomach issues, memory loss, and skin conditions. It can be grown hydroponically in nutrient-rich water without soil.

Zones: Are suitable for USDA Zones 8-11.

Exposure: They prefer part to full sun.

Soil: Can grow in a wide range of soils, including rock, sand, and mud. It thrives in moist environments and can even grow directly in water, forming floating mats.

Water: They require an abundance of water and thrive in high-humidity environments (65-80%).

Fertilizer: Feed them moderately with a slow-release fertilizer. They are not heavy feeders but do appreciate nutrients. Avoid using fertilizer if growing Bacopa in water to prevent algae growth.

Bloom Period: Blooms from April to September (Spring to Summer)

Flower Color: The flowers of Bacopa are small, white, with yellow centers.

Size: They can reach a maximum height of about 6 inches (15 cm) and grow outward in a sprawling pattern.

Toxicity: They are generally safe but can cause nausea, increased intestinal motility, and gastrointestinal upset in humans. Most animals do not enjoy the taste due to its bitter compounds, which also act as a pest deterrent.

Pruning: Pruning helps maintain its shape and encourages new growth. In the spring, pinch off the tips of each growing stem. In mid-summer, cut the plant back by about a third if it looks unruly. Remove any dead branches and spent flowers to keep the plant looking tidy and to promote healthy growth.

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK589635/>; <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/bacopa-monni-eri-benefits>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bacopa_monni-eri; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/herbs/bacopa-plants/brahmi-plant-care-and-uses.htm>; <https://pondinformer.com/moneywort-waterhyssop-bacopa-monni-eri/>; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/herbs/bacopa-plants/brahmi-plant-care-and-uses.htm>.

Bee Blossum
(*Gaura lindheimeri*)
Onagraceae



Geographical Origin: Southern United States and Mexico

Overview: Also known as Lindheimer's Bee Blossum, it is a perennial gem that enchants gardens with its whimsical, butterfly-like flowers. Imagine a summer meadow dotted with delicate blooms, each one an invitation to bees and other pollinators.

General Characteristics and Care: Bee Blossum is a durable and robust plant that can handle heat and humidity well. It features tall, airy stems adorned with small white to pink flowers. It requires minimal care and can adapt to a variety of soil conditions.

Zones: Generally hardy in USDA Zones 5-9.

Exposure: They grow in full sun but can tolerate partial shade. A sunny spot will promote vigorous growth and abundant flowering.

Soil: Thrives in well-draining soil with a pH range of 6.0 to 7.5. Whether your garden offers sandy, loamy, or chalky soil, this plant will adapt, flourishing in neutral to slightly acidic environments.

Water: Though Gaura is drought-tolerant, it appreciates regular watering during its first growing season to establish a strong root system. Once settled, it is managed with less frequent watering. Imagine it sipping from a gentle rain, needing just enough to keep its roots happy and healthy.

Fertilizer: Generally, Gaura doesn't require much fertilization. If your soil is poor, you could use a slow-release balanced fertilizer in the spring. Too much fertilizer can lead to excessive foliage at the expense of flowers.

Bloom Period: They enjoy a long blooming season, typically from early summer into fall. Only a few flowers open at a time, but they bloom in sufficient numbers to create a very graceful display for weeks.

Flower Color: Known for their delicate starry blooms that seem to flutter in the breeze, the 4-petaled flowers, which can be white, pink, or soft blush, appear in long open sprays on slender wand-like stems. This gives the plant its other common name, "Wand Flower."

Size: Bee Blossum can grow up to 2-4 feet (60-120 cm) tall and about 2-3 feet wide.

Toxicity: Non-toxic to humans and animals, making it a safe and delightful addition to any garden.

Pruning: Trim back spent flower spikes to encourage repeat blooming. In late fall or early spring, cut back the whole plant to about 6 inches (15 cm) to promote new growth.

Sources: <https://www.gardenia.net/genus/gaura-lindheimeri>; <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/gaura-gaura-lindheimeri/>; <https://www.gettyimages.com/photos/gaura-lindheimeri>.

BIDENS
(Bidens ferulifolia)
Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Mexico and the Southwestern United States.

Overview: Bidens is a perennial herb that thrives in warm climates. Known for its bright, cheerful blooms and resilience, it often grows as an annual with a profusion of fragrant, yellow daisies. The Royal Horticultural Society has given it its prestigious Award of Garden Merit (AGM).

General Characteristics and Care: They are a low-maintenance plant that produces vibrant yellow flowers. It is a favorite among gardeners for its ability to attract pollinators like bees and butterflies. The five-petaled blossoms are carried on wiry stems above the bushy foliage of finely dissected dark green leaves. Rich in nectar, the flowers are a good pollen and nectar source for bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects. Tolerant of heat, wind, and drought, this fast-growing Southwest U.S. native is an excellent performer.

Zones: Thrives best in USDA zones 8-11.

Exposure: Loves full sun! Plant where it can soak up at least six hours of direct sunlight every day. Without enough light, it might get a bit leggy and won't bloom as much.

Soil: This plant isn't picky about soil but prefers well-drained conditions to prevent root rot. Bidens does great in rich, humus soil and can handle a range of pH levels, ideally neutral to slightly acidic.

Water: While Bidens can handle drought, it looks its best with regular watering. Aim for about an inch of water per week, especially during hot spells.

Fertilizer: Give them a boost with a general-purpose fertilizer monthly or use a timed-release fertilizer when planting for steady growth.

Bloom Period: Expect a blooming extravaganza from May to October.

Flower Color: Bidens sports bright yellow, gold, white, pink, and orange flowers. Each bloom is like a mini burst of sunshine.

Size: It can grow up to 18 inches tall and spread 12-36 inches wide.

Toxicity: Bidens is non-toxic to humans and animals

Pruning: No need to fuss with deadheading. Bidens are a breeze to maintain and keep looking good with minimal effort.

Sources: <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/bidens-ferulifolia>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bidens_ferulifolia; <https://www.thespruce.com/bidens-plant-profile-5069525>; <https://www.gardenersworld.com/plants/bidens-ferulifolia/>; <https://www.saundersbrothers.com/plant/Bidens-ferulifolia-Goldilocks-Rocks>

BIRD OF PARADISE 'GIANT'

(*Strelitzia nicolai*)

Strelitziaceae



Geographical Origin: Africa

Overview: The *Strelitzia nicolai*, with its majestic, paddle-shaped leaves, gleams with a glossy green sheen and pronounced ribbing. Its fan-like leaf formation mimics the plumage of a bird, giving it the enchanting name "Bird of Paradise." This plant can grow to impressive heights, becoming a captivating focal point in any setting.

General Characteristics and Care: The Giant Bird of Paradise (*nicolai*) is a perennial marvel, where one flower spathe sprouts from another, creating a striking, double-decked visual. Known for its year-round beauty, this plant is a coveted ornamental gem, celebrated for its lush, tropical foliage and exotic flowers.

Zones: Thrives in zones 10-12.

Exposure: For optimal growth, position it in bright, indirect light. It can tolerate lower light levels but flourishes best in bright, filtered sunlight. Direct sun can scorch its leaves, so shield it from harsh rays.

Soil: Prefers well-draining soil with a slightly acidic to neutral pH.

Water: Hydrate the plant thoroughly when the top inch of soil is dry. Ensure good drainage to avoid standing water, which the plant detests. In winter, reduce watering to prevent waterlogged conditions.

Fertilizer: Use a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer tailored for tropical plants during the growing seasons of spring and summer. Follow the instructions and avoid over-fertilizing to prevent salt accumulation.

Bloom Period: Blossoms predominantly in spring and summer.

Flower Color: Its flowers are a spectacle of nature, displaying vibrant blue and white hues that mimic the elegance of bird feathers.

Size: Grows up to 20' feet tall

Toxicity: Harmful to dogs, cats, and horses if ingested.

Pruning: Regular pruning is essential to remove dead or damaged leaves, maintaining the plant's aesthetic and health.

Sources: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strelitziaceae>; <https://www.happyhouseplants.co.uk/blogs/houseplant-blog/strelitzia-nicolai-white-bird-of-paradise-care>; <https://www.monrovia.com/giant-bird-of-paradise.html>; <https://plantura.garden/uk/houseplants/bird-of-paradise-plant/strelitzia-nicolai>; <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/strelitzia-nicolai>.

BIRD OF PARADISE 'ORANGE' (Small)

(*Strelitzia reginae*)

Strelitziaceae



Geographical Origin: South Africa

Overview: This evergreen perennial forms a clump of large, broadly oval, long-stalked gray-green leaves arising from an underground stem (rhizome). *Strelitzia reginae* is the recipient of the prestigious Award of Garden Merit of the Royal Horticultural Society.

General Characteristics and Care: The Bird of Paradise 'Orange' is known for its striking, bird-like flowers and broad, lush foliage. They contrast nicely with its beautiful, crested flowers, which emerge from a horizontal green and pink beak-like spathe.

Zones: It is hardy to USDA zones 10 to 12.

Exposure: They prefer full sun to partial shade. In hot, direct sun, it may benefit from some afternoon shade to protect it from scorching.

Soil: This plant prefers well-draining, slightly acidic soil rich in organic matter. It can also tolerate slightly alkaline soil.

Water: The plant prefers consistently moist soil but can tolerate short periods of drought. Overwatering can cause root rot, so it is important to water sparingly and allow the soil to dry out slightly between waterings.

Fertilizer: Use a balanced fertilizer once a month during the growing season (spring and summer) to promote healthy growth and flowering.

Bloom Period: It typically blooms in fall and summer.

Flower Color: The flowers are a vivid combination of brilliant orange and vivid blue, emerging from a green and pink beak-like spathe, resembling the crest on a bird's head.

Size: This plant can grow to 5' - 6' (150cm - 180cm) tall.

Toxicity: Birds of Paradise can be irritating to cats, dogs, and humans if the foliage is consumed. The best practice is always to keep these plants out of reach of small children and pets.

Pruning: The plant does not require regular pruning. However, old, or damaged leaves should be cut off in the spring. These should be cut right down to the base with a sharp pair of secateurs (pruning shears).

Sources: <https://houseplanthouse.com/2022/03/06/strelitzia-bird-of-paradise-care-guide/>;
<https://www.gardenia.net/plant/strelitzia-reginae-bird-of-paradise>; <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/bird-of-paradise-strelitzia-reginae/>;
<https://www.thesill.com/blog/how-to-care-for-bird-of-paradise/>;
<https://www.amazon.com/Bird-Paradise-Strelitzia-Reginae-Plant/dp/B071S24PBZ>

Bleeding Heart
(Clerodendrum thomsoniae)
Lamiaceae



Geographical Origin: Tropical West Africa

Overview: Bleeding hearts are a vigorous twining shrub with striking flowers. It is a perennial sub-tropical vine that wraps its tendrils around a trellis or other support. Gardeners appreciate the plant's shiny green foliage and dazzling crimson and white blooms.

General Characteristics and Care: They make an excellent hanging container plant. It is a non-invasive climber for a fence, pergola, or trellis and an indoor plant for a brightly lit conservatory or sunroom. Its bold, eye-catching flowers provide color for much of the year.

Exposure: They thrive in bright, filtered light. Adequate light is essential for its abundant blooms, making it a perfect choice for well-lit indoor areas or shaded outdoor spaces.

Soil: They grow in gardens and prefer well-drained soil rich in organic material. If planted in a garden bed, ensure the soil is well-drained. Dig a hole twice the container's width, remove the plant from the container, and place it into the hole so the soil level is the same as the surrounding ground. Fill the hole firmly and water in well, even if the soil is moist.

Water: During the active growth period, water them plentifully. If in a container, keep the potting mixture thoroughly moist, but never allow the pot to stand in water. During winter rest, water enough to keep the soil or potting mixture from drying out.

Fertilizer: Give actively growing plants applications of liquid fertilizer every two weeks. Withhold fertilizer during the winter rest period.

Bloom Period: They bloom heavily in spring and summer. If it does not bloom much, move it to a place where it will get more indirect light.

Flower Color: Their flowers are primarily white and heart-shaped with bright red accents, creating a striking contrast and giving them their name.

Size: Can grow up to 3 to 3.5 meters (10 to 12 feet) tall.

Toxicity: Bleeding Heart is not considered hazardous to humans or animals.

Pruning: Regular pruning helps maintain the plant's shape and encourages more blooms. Remove dead or weak stems and trim back after the blooming period to control growth.

Sources: <https://www.nparks.gov.sg/florafaunaweb/flora/1/3/1370>;
<https://www.plantsrescue.com/prosts/clerodendrum-thomsoniae>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clerodendrum_thomsoniae; <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/bleeding-heart-vine-clerodendrum-thomsoniae/>; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/vines/bleeding-heart-vine/clerodendrum-bleeding-heart.htm>; <https://seed2plant.in/products/bleeding-heart-vine-white-clerodendrum-thomsoniae>

BLUE DAZE 'Blue My Mind'
(*Evolvulus glomeratus* hybrid)
Convolvulaceae



Geographical Origin: Brazil, Guyana, Bolivia, and Venezuela.

Overview: This tender, non-vining herbaceous perennial is most often grown as an annual in colder climates. The true blue flowers and fuzzy silvery-green foliage are very heat-tolerant, making it a great addition to southern gardens, where it winters well and can be considered a perennial.

General Characteristics and Care: It thrives in full sun and is moderately drought-tolerant once established, although it may need supplemental water during periods of drought. This plant makes an excellent bedding plant for flower gardens throughout the summer and can also be used in pots, especially in hanging baskets.

Zones: It thrives in zones 9-11.

Exposure: Full sun is essential, requiring six to eight hours of sunlight daily, and it can handle intense heat. If planted in too much shade, it can become leggy, sprawl, produce fewer blooms, and lose the silvery sheen on its foliage.

Soil: This plant prefers acidic to neutral, moist, well-drained soil.

Water: It thrives when it receives consistent, even moisture but does not like to sit in soggy soil. In good, well-draining soil, about half to one inch of water per week (rainfall and/or irrigation) will cause it to thrive, but in dense soil, this might be too much water. Once established, it has a good tolerance for drought conditions. Overwatering causing root rot is one of the quickest ways to kill this plant.

Fertilizer: Feed monthly in spring and summer using a general-purpose liquid fertilizer. Do not feed the plant during the winter in warm climates where it is reliably hardy as a perennial.

Bloom Period: It blooms in spring and summer.

Flower Color: The flowers are a vivid blue.

Size: The plant grows to 1 foot tall and trails up to 2 feet.

Toxicity: It is non-toxic to humans and animals, making it a safe addition to any garden.

Pruning: Pinch back stems when the plant is young to encourage a bushier growth habit. Late in the growing season, as stems become somewhat scraggly, hard pruning can stimulate new growth and make plants more attractive going into fall. No deadheading of spent flowers is necessary as these plants are self-cleaning; spent blooms fall off independently.

Sources: <https://www.thespruce.com/evolvulus-plant-profile-5072786>;
<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/evolvulus-glomeratus/>

BLUE SAGE

(*Salvia azurea*)

Lamiaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the U.S. Midwest

Overview: Blue Sage is a clump-forming shrubby perennial with beautiful wands of large 2-lipped sky-blue flowers that is active from midsummer to frost. Spectacular in the late-season garden, this attractive sage is perfect for beds and borders where it will happily mingle with nearby plants.

General Characteristics and Care: It grows tall and has opposite leaves that are widely spaced along the stem. The flowers add a wonderful shade of blue in the autumn season when yellow and white flowers seem to dominate the landscape. They occur along a terminal spike with several flowers in each petal. The flowers are blue and tubular, and the throat of the flower is white. The upper lip is hooded and is much shorter than the three-lobed lower lip, which serves as a landing pad for pollinators.

Zones: It thrives in zones 5 to 9.

Exposure: The plant thrives in full sun to partial shade. It loves basking in sunny locations but can handle a bit of shade too

Soil: Blue Sage loves well-drained soils and adapts to sandy, loam, and clay types. Limestone-based soil is ideal. Be mindful: in overly-rich soil, stems tend to flop over, a problem for all members of the *salvia* family.

Water: Water these plants when the soil feels dry to the touch.

Fertilizer: Minimal fertilization is needed. Over-fertilization can lead to excessive growth and flopping stems. A light application of a balanced fertilizer in spring should suffice.

Bloom Period: They bloom from July to November.

Flower Color: A charming blend of blue and white, with blue petals and a white throat, making Blue Sage a visual delight in any garden.

Size: Up to about 5 feet tall. Typically, it ranges from 3 to 5 feet.

Toxicity: They are nontoxic and a perfect addition to any garden when there may be concerns for children.

Pruning: A good rule of thumb is to prune back *salvias* in late winter or early spring before new growth begins. This allows the plants to recover and promote healthy growth during the growing season.

Sources: https://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/prairie/plantx/blue_sagex.htm;
<https://www.flawildflowers.org/flower-friday-salvia-azurea/>; <https://meadowlarkjournal.com/blog/pruning-salvias>; <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/salvia-azurea>; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/salvia-azurea/>

Brush Cherry (Eugenia “topiary”)
(Syzygium paniculatum)
(Formerly *Eugenia myrtifolia*)
Myrtaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to New South Wales, Australia

Overview: Brush Cherry is an evergreen shrub or small tree. It is known for its dense foliage and attractive red fruits, making this one of the premier hedge and topiary plants throughout the US and elsewhere.

General Characteristics and Care: This plant has glossy, dark green leaves and small white flowers. It can be grown as a hedge, specimen plant, or even a bonsai. It requires minimal care once established. Brush Cherry, its fruit called “Lilly Pilly”, can be used in various culinary dishes, such as jams, jellies, and sauces. In its native habitat, it provides important food for local wildlife. This plant is also popular for its use in topiary due to its dense and manageable growth habit.

Zones: USDA hardiness zones 9-11.

Exposure: Thrives in full sun to partial shade. It can tolerate some shade but will produce more flowers and fruit in full sun.

Soil: Prefers well-drained, slightly acidic to neutral soil with a pH of 6.0-7.0. Performs best in a rich, loamy soil.

Water: Likes an average to large amount of water. The tree likes water but it's not a requirement and it will simply grow more slowly with less water.

Fertilizer: Use a balanced fertilizer in the spring and summer to promote growth and fruiting. A general-purpose fertilizer applied twice a year is usually sufficient.

Bloom Period: Typically blooms in spring and summer.

Flower Color: Small, white, and fragrant flowers often appear in clusters, adding a delicate beauty to the dark green leaves of the plant.

Size: Can grow up to 10-20 feet tall and 5-10 feet wide, depending on growing conditions and pruning practices.

Toxicity: Brush Cherry contains cyanogenic glycosides and is harmful to dogs and cats when chewed. Symptoms include vomiting, difficulty breathing, and sudden collapse.

Pruning: Pruning should be carried out after the flowering period to avoid removing buds. Regular trimming encourages denser foliage and more abundant fruit production.

Sources: <https://www.growplants.org/growing/syzygium-paniculatum>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syzygium_paniculatum; <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/FP567>;
<https://plantmaster.com/plants/eplant.php?plantnum=252>; <https://www.justanswer.com/veterinary/91119-five-syzygium-paniculatum-lilly-pilly-yard.html>.

BUTTERFLY BUSH (*Buddleja* 'MissViolet')

(*Buddleja* spp.)

Scrophulariaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Tibet and south-central China.

Overview: *Buddleja* 'Miss Violet' is an herbaceous perennial developed by Dr. Dennis Werner at North Carolina State University by crossing two Butterfly Bush-related species. It is known for its vibrant purple flowers and compact growth habit. Several species are popular garden plants and are commonly known as "butterfly bushes," owing to their attractiveness to butterflies, and have become staples of the modern butterfly garden; they are also attractive to bees and moths.

General Characteristics and Care: These lovely beauties have a semi-upright, dense branching structure with dark purple fragrant flowers that bloom throughout the summer and fall. This variety was developed to be nearly seedless, reducing the invasiveness seen in many Butterfly Bush-related species. It is reliably cold hardy, though it may die back to the ground in colder regions.

Zones: USDA Hardiness Zones 5-9.

Exposure: *Buddleja* 'Miss Violet' requires full sun exposure to thrive.

Soil: They are adaptable to various soil types and pH levels and can handle environmental salt. This plant is highly tolerant of urban pollution and can even flourish in inner-city environments.

Water: They can be watered weekly as they are heat and drought-tolerant once established.

Fertilizer: No specific fertilizer recommendations are mentioned, but a balanced, moderate fertilizer applied in the growing season (spring-fall) should be sufficient.

Bloom Period: Produces attractive flowers from summer to early fall especially when few other shrubs would be in bloom.

Flower Color: Features long panicles of small, fragrant purple tubular flowers.

Size: They will grow to about 5 feet tall at maturity with a spread of 4 feet.

Toxicity: Neither the flowers nor any other parts of the Butterfly Bush are classified as toxic to animals or humans.

Pruning: Prune in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. In warmer regions, trim in spring to maintain a compact shape as it blooms on new wood.

Sources: <https://www.hunker.com/12431958/is-the-butterfly-plant-poisonous-to-animals-or-humans;>
<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=443726&isprofile=0&bt=7;> [https://plants.chaletnursery.com/12120004/Plant/23761/Miss_Violet_Butterfly_Bush/;](https://plants.chaletnursery.com/12120004/Plant/23761/Miss_Violet_Butterfly_Bush/)
<https://springmeadownursery.com/plantfinder/miss-violet-05840>

CALADIUM
(Caladium spp.)
Araceae



Geographical Origin: Native to South America and Central America and naturalized in India, parts of Africa, and various tropical islands.

Overview: Caladiums are beloved tuberous tropical perennials, often recognized by their common name, "elephant ear," due to their large, heart-shaped leaves. Every year, Lake Placid, Florida, celebrates these stunning plants with a festival during the last weekend of July. This vibrant event offers visitors enchanting tours of the extensive caladium fields, showcasing the local growers' colorful bounty.

General Characteristics and Care: They are prized for their ornamental beauty, displaying large, arrowhead-shaped leaves in an array of striking patterns in white, pink, and red. These plants bring a bold splash of color to gardens and indoor spaces alike.

Zones: Flourish best in USDA Zones 8-10, where the climate suits their tropical nature.

Exposure: Place it in bright to medium-bright indirect light. While it can tolerate direct morning sun, it's best to protect it from harsh afternoon rays to avoid leaf burn.

Soil: These plants prefer well-draining, rich, slightly acidic soil with a pH between 5.5 and 6.5.

Water: They require moderate watering (damp not soggy). Caladium leaves will go dormant and droop without water.

Fertilizer: Feed them with diluted liquid houseplant fertilizer once a month during spring and summer. Ensure the soil is moist before applying fertilizer and skip feeding in fall and winter.

Bloom Period: Showcase their vibrant foliage from spring through fall, adding continuous beauty to your garden or indoor space.

Flower Color: Like a painter's palette, bursting with hues of white, green, red, and pink. Their leaves are artistically mottled, veined, and striped, creating a dynamic visual display.

Size: Typically grow to a height of 18 to 24 inches, though dwarf varieties remain under 12 inches, making them perfect for smaller spaces.

Toxicity: While visually captivating, they are toxic to pets and humans if ingested. They can irritate the mouth and stomach, so it's important to handle them with care and keep them out of reach of curious pets and children.

Pruning: Use scissors or secateurs (hand pruners) to remove any dead, damaged, or diseased leaves and stems during the growing season. Regular pruning helps keep your plant looking its best and supports healthy growth.

Sources: <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/caladiums/>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caladium>; <https://leafyplace.com/caladium-plants/>; <https://www.longfield-gardens.com/article/all-about-caladiums>

CALAMUS (Sweet Flag)

(*Acorus calamus*)

Acoraceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the wetlands of Europe, Asia, and North America.

Overview: Sweet Flag is a versatile aquatic perennial that thrives in wet environments. This plant forms dense tufts of erect, sword-shaped bright green leaves, each adorned with a slightly wavy edge and a prominent midrib. Historically, they were a key ingredient in toothpowders, and during the 1960s and 1970s, they were popular in dry shampoos. Beyond its practical uses, it holds magical significance, often associated with luck, healing, and protection. Placing its root in kitchen corners was believed to ward off hunger.

General Characteristics and Care: In late spring, they showcase inconspicuous greenish-yellow flowers on finger-like inflorescences, which later transform into tiny reddish berries. The crushed foliage and rootstocks emit a pleasant aromatic fragrance, making it a delightful addition to gardens. It's an excellent choice for naturalizing and adds a decorative touch to water gardens and ponds.

Zones: Suitable for USDA hardiness zones 2-11.

Exposure: They require full direct sun for at least six hours during the middle of the day.

Soil: Calamus thrives in soils with a pH range from acidic to basic (6 to 8), making it adaptable to various soil types.

Water: Being an aquatic plant, it needs consistent moisture and can even grow in shallow water.

Fertilizer: To promote healthy growth and blooming, fertilize regularly with a balanced fertilizer.

Bloom Period: It blooms from May to July.

Flower Color: The plant features long, elegant grass-like leaves that are bright green with yellow veins. Its small white flowers emit a sweet fragrance.

Size: it can grow to a height of 2 to 3 feet (30 to 60 cm).

Toxicity: While Sweet Flag has been used for its aromatic properties and occasionally ingested, it lacks rigorous clinical research. Some reports suggest that oral use can cause severe nausea and prolonged vomiting.

Pruning: Pruning is rarely necessary. If needed, use clean garden shears to trim overgrown or dead stems, but avoid excessive cutting to prevent stress and stunted growth.

Sources: <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/acorus-calamus>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acorus_calamus; <https://theepicentre.com/spice/calamus-sweet-flag/>; https://www.fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/plant-of-the-week/acorus_americanus.shtml; <https://monicawilde.com/edible-sweet-flag-acorus-calamus-singers-root/>.

CAMELLIA (Various)
(*Camellia japonica*)
Theaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to China.

Overview: Camellia is a striking flowering shrub or small tree. Known for its vibrant and abundant blooms, it is a favorite in Southern gardens. This plant's adaptability to various climates makes it a versatile choice for gardeners and is celebrated as the state flower of Alabama.

General Characteristics and Care: These stunning shrubs can grow up to a foot a year, eventually forming a small tree. They should be planted in fall or early spring, particularly in the South, where the root system needs to be established before cold weather sets in.

Zones: Hardy in USDA zones 7 through 9, making it an excellent addition to woodland gardens or as a specimen plant in borders.

Exposure: Choose a spot with partial shade, especially in the afternoon, to protect camellias from strong winds and hot sun, which can scorch their leaves. East or north-facing spots are ideal, and mature plants can handle full sun if their roots are shaded by dense leaves.

Soil: They thrive in well-drained, fertile soil with a slightly acidic pH of 5.5 to 6.5. If your soil is heavy clay or very sandy, improve it with organic matter like compost or peat moss.

Water: Regular, deep watering is crucial, particularly during the growing season and in the fall when flower buds form. Camellias cannot withstand prolonged drought.

Fertilizer: Fertilizing can be damaging if not done correctly. Instead, provide an annual mulch of old manure or compost, topping it up in summer if needed. A sprinkle of blood and bone on the mulch in early spring and early fall can also be beneficial.

Bloom Period: They bloom from late winter into spring, typically between January and March. The flowers on each plant usually last three to four weeks.

Flower Color: The blooms range from miniature flowers 1.5 inches (4 cm) to large blossoms 5 inches across (12 cm). They come in colors from pure white to soft pink to dark red, with various forms including single, semi-double, double, formal double, or full peony form.

Size: These plants can grow to a height of 6 to 20 feet (180 cm to 6.1 m).

Toxicity: Camellia plants are safe and non-toxic to dogs, so go ahead and plant a few in your garden.

Pruning: Minimal pruning is required. If necessary, prune just after flowering to shape the plant or limit its size, avoiding late-season pruning to prevent removing next year's flower buds.

Sources: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/camellia-japonica/>; <https://www.gardenia.net/genus/camellias-japonica>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camellia_japonica; <https://www.southernliving.com/garden/camellias>; <https://www.weekand.com/home-garden/article/camellia-plant-safe-dogs-18042401.php>.

CANNA LILY

(*Canna indica*)

Cannaceae



Geographical Origin: South America; West Indies; Central America

Overview: In addition to its uses as an ornamental, *Canna indica* has an edible, starchy root. The starch is easily digestible and therefore well suited as a health and baby food. The tubers can be eaten raw or cooked. The starch is also suitable for baking. It has been used for the treatment of industrial waste waters through constructed wetlands. For example, it is effective for the removal of pollutants from paper mill wastewater.¹

General Characteristics and Care: Canna Lilies are low maintenance and easy to grow, and both their flowers and foliage offer long-lasting color in the garden. Canna Lily plants are an excellent choice for growers with warm summer climates. The plants thrive throughout extended periods of heat and can tolerate humidity well.

Zones: Most Canna Lilies are winter hardy in zones 8-11.

Exposure: Cannas need full sun to reach their flowering potential. Shade encourages leggy growth that can cause foliage to flop over. Plants in shade won't produce as many flowers, either. Several varieties are grown for their colorful leaves, which are not as bright in the shade.

Soil: Cannas need mildly acidic, moist soil with a pH of around 6.0-6.5.

Water: They like wet feet to thrive. If not planted in an area that stays fairly moist, they will need to be watered deeply once a week. Dry soil can cause the leaves to lose their brilliant colors.

Fertilizer: Cannas are heavy feeders. Use a slow-release fertilizer around each plant at the time of planting and water well. Fertilize again mid-season. You can also mulch plants with compost or rotted manure to keep soil fertility high.

Bloom Period: They bloom from mid-summer to fall in a warm climate like Florida.

Flower Color: They have an array of colors varying from red, orange, and yellow to pink or cream.

Size: Most varieties grow between 3-5' tall, though dwarf types will top out under 2' and under the right conditions, some can grow to be 8' tall.

Toxicity: Unlike their more notorious relatives in the Liliaceae family, Canna Lilies lack harmful compounds that could pose a health risk.

Pruning: Deadhead regularly to prevent plants from setting seed, which will help prolong bloom.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canna_indica; <https://www.americanmeadows.com/content/flower-bulbs/canna-lily-flower-bulbs/how-to-grow-cannas>; <https://greg.app/canna-lily-toxic-to-humans/>; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=what+zones+do+cannas+grow+in>.

CELOSIA
(*Celosia spicata*)
Amaranthaceae



Geographical Origin: Tropical regions of Africa, South America, and Southeast Asia

Overview: Celosia, an herbaceous, summer annual is grown as an ornamental for its distinctive, erect flower spikes. This short-lived perennial plant, primarily used for its decorative value, features edible leaves and flowers. It thrives in Mediterranean, desert, subtropical, temperate, or tropical climates, presenting distinctive erect flower spikes reminiscent of a sheaf of wheat.

General Characteristics and Care: Celosia branch into many strong stems, forming a bushy yet open upright plant up to 2 feet wide and 3 or more feet tall. Its alternate, medium to dark-green leaves may be mottled or tinged with burgundy, measuring 2-6 inches long. These leaves are smooth, entire, oval, or lance-shaped, and strongly veined. They are known to contain calcium, phosphorus, protein, and vitamins A and C, as well as iron, making them a highly nutritious food source. The flowers, tender leaves, and stems are often steamed, boiled, or stir-fried and eaten like any other vegetable greens.

Zones: Suitable for zones 9 to 11.

Exposure: It loves the sun and needs full or almost full sun to thrive.

Soil: Grow them in moist, but well-drained soil.

Water: It only requires an average amount of water to flourish.

Fertilizer: Feed with a liquid fertilizer once every 10-14 days while in flower – do not fertilize in winter.

Bloom Period: They can bloom during Spring, Summer, and Autumn.

Flower Color: Their flower color ranges from pink to purple, with white flowers that are small and grow in groups on inflorescence stalks shaped like a cone.

Size: It can grow between 10-90 cm (4-36 inches).

Toxicity: It is non-toxic to dogs, cats, and horses.

Pruning: *Pinching*, which removes young shoot tips, promotes compact, bushy growth with more flowers while *stalking* ensures flower spikes that tilt or fall naturally turn upwards.

Sources: <https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/grow-plants/how-to-grow-celosia/>;
<https://plantura.garden/uk/flowers-perennials/celosia/celosia-overview>;
<https://www.growplants.org/growing/celosia-spicata>; <https://www.gardenia.net/genus/celosia>;
https://www.picturethisai.com/wiki/Celosia_spicata.html; <https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants/celosia-spicata>; <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/wheat-celosia-celosia-spicata/>; <https://www.therightflowers.com/colorful-edible-and-medicinal-celosia/>

CHINESE TIMBER BAMBOO

(*Phyllostachys vivax*)

Poaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to China

Overview: Chinese Timber Bamboo is a tall, robust evergreen plant and the hardiest of all the timber bamboos. It establishes and grows rapidly, reaching astonishing sizes very quickly. This plant thrives exceptionally well under suitable conditions. It is a clumping bamboo and does not run so is not invasive. As a grove it is long-lived. The bamboo in the BHC garden is well over 20 years old.

General Characteristics and Care: Initially forming clumps, it will eventually establish large thickets via underground running rhizomes unless artificially restricted. The canes grow a deep emerald green and slowly mature to a yellowish green. This bamboo features larger, drooping green leaves. Although not suitable for heavy construction, they are ideal for creating garden structures, trellises, and decorative elements

Zones: Suitable for zones 7-10.

Exposure: Plant in full sun to ensure optimal growth.

Soil: This bamboo does not tolerate very wet soils but succeeds in most soil types.

Water: When planted, water regularly during the initial period to establish a strong root system. Once established, reduce watering, providing just a few deep drinks in summer.

Fertilizer: The most crucial time to apply fertilizer is in early spring when new shoots are forming. Avoid using too much salt-based fertilizer to prevent leaf burn, and stagger applications with other forms of plant food.

Bloom Period: Typically, does not have a notable bloom period.

Flower Color: It rarely flowers. When it does, the flowers are not particularly showy.

Size: A single plant can reach 35 feet in height with canes three inches in diameter in a grove four feet by four feet.

Toxicity: Not hazardous to humans or animals. It poses no significant concerns regarding toxicity.

Pruning: Remove weak, dead, damaged, or spindly stems in spring and thin to show off stems to best effect. Cut out any flowering shoots promptly to discourage more from forming.

Sources: https://www.scottishbamboo.com/Phyllostachys+Vivax/0_CAAA004_CAAA015/PRAA056.htm;

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/198452/phyllostachys-vivax-f-aureocaulis/details>;

<https://www.boocrazy.com/available-running-bamboo/phyllostachys-vivax>;

<https://www.portlandnursery.com/shrubs/phyllostachys>;

<https://www.backyardgardener.com/plantname/phyllostachys-vivax-vivax-bamboo/>;

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phyllostachys_vivax

COLEUS (VARIED)
(Plectranthus scutellarioides)
Lamiaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Southeastern Asia

Overview: Coleus is an upright annual or short-lived perennial plant known for its aromatic and colorful foliage. The leaves often feature wavy, toothed, or scalloped edges, creating a striking visual appeal.

General Characteristics and Care: The vibrant foliage of coleus is the star of the show, showcasing intricate patterns in shades of green, red, pink, purple, yellow, and orange. Leaves can be broadly or finely serrated, with some varieties boasting ruffled or lobed edges.

Zones: As a tender perennial, coleus is hardy in USDA zones 10 to 11, but it's typically grown as an annual in cooler climates. In tropical regions, it can be enjoyed year-round.

Exposure: When planted, it performs best in partial shade, as intense sunlight can fade its vibrant colors. However, some sun-tolerant varieties can thrive in full sun with adequate water.

Soil: These plants prefer well-draining soil rich in organic matter. They thrive in fertile, loamy soil with a slightly acidic to neutral pH, ideally between 6.0 and 7.0.

Water: They love consistently moist soil. Water them regularly, allowing the soil to dry slightly between waterings. Be mindful not to overwater, as this can lead to root rot.

Fertilizer: Regular feeding with a balanced water-soluble fertilizer benefits coleus. Apply the fertilizer every 4-6 weeks during the growing season, following the package instructions for proper dilution.

Bloom Period: Summer

Flower Color: Flowers range from blue to white, adding a delicate touch to the plant's overall appearance.

Size: It can grow to be 6 to 36 inches tall and wide, making it a versatile choice for various garden spaces.

Toxicity: The most common issues include mild or minor skin irritation from exposure to skin or from ingestion.

Pruning: Cut the growing tips and remove any flower spikes to encourage bushier growth and keep the plant's energy focused on its vibrant foliage. Regular pruning helps maintain the desired size and shape of the plant.

Sources: <https://www.finegardening.com/plant/coleus-solenostemon-scutellarioides/>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coleus_scutellarioides; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/coleus-scutellarioides/>;
<https://www.gardenia.net/guide/coleus-plant-care-and-growing-guide/>;
<https://www.ourhouseplants.com/plants/coleus>.

CONFEDERATE JASMIN
(Trachelospermum jasminoides)
Apocynaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to eastern and southeastern Asia

Overview: Confederate Jasmine, also known as Star Jasmine, is a twining evergreen woody perennial. It can be grown as a vine, a sprawling shrub, or a ground cover. In late spring, clusters of sweetly fragrant, starry, creamy white flowers appear, with sporadic additional blooms in summer, attracting bees. The plant features shiny, oval, opposite dark green leaves (up to 3.5 inches long) on wiry, dark brown stems.

General Characteristics and Care: Aptly named for its small, star-shaped flowers with five petals. The flowers emit a heavy, gardenia-like scent that becomes more pronounced on warm summer evenings. The plant's twining growth habit allows its stems to be trained up structures such as arbors, pergolas, and trellises, though the tendrils will not attach to masonry. When allowed to sprawl horizontally as a ground cover, it will develop new roots along the runners

Zones: This plant thrives in zones 8 to 10.

Exposure: They can grow in full sun to shade, adapting well to different light conditions.

Soil: It can tolerate various soil conditions but performs best in amended, well-drained soil with a slightly acidic pH of 6.0 to 7.0.

Water: For optimal performance, it requires regular watering. Irrigate when the top 1 to 2 inches of soil feels dry, increasing frequency during prolonged heat or dry spells. Container plants need more frequent watering. Once established, they are drought tolerant.

Fertilizer: Requires little to no supplemental fertilizer when planted in well-amended soil. early spring, apply a balanced, slow-release fertilizer. Avoid over-fertilizing, as it may lead to more foliage and fewer flowers. Applying a thin layer of compost around the base each spring helps feed the plants, suppress weeds, and retain moisture. Yellow leaves may indicate a nutrient deficit.

Bloom Period: This plant blooms from spring into summer.

Flower Color: Flowers bloom in clusters on new growth, featuring shades of white, yellow, pink, or apricot.

Size: Depending on the variety and growth method, it can reach 2 to 20 feet tall and wide. Vertical vines can grow up to 20 feet tall, while ground covers will grow 1 to 2 feet tall.

Toxicity: Not toxic to pets or humans, though mild digestive upset can occur if any ornamental plant is ingested. Note that the stems exude a white, sticky sap when cut, which may cause skin irritation or stain clothing. Use caution when pruning.

Pruning: Amenable to pruning and can be shaped into shrubs, hedges, or espaliers. Due to its rapid growth rate, plants may require pruning more than once during summer or early fall.

Sources: <https://www.gardendesign.com/vines/star-jasmine.html>; <https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to-grow-plants/how-to-grow-star-jasmine/> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trachelospermum_jasminoides.

COONTIE (Cardboard Palm)
(Zamia integrifolia)
Zamiaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the southeastern United States and the Bahamas

Overview: A small, tough woody cycad that resembles a small fern, it typically stands one to three feet tall. It features stiff, glossy, featherlike leaves attached to a thick, short underground stem. Once, Florida's native peoples ground up the stems to create a starchy flour for cooking, nearly driving it to extinction. However, don't try this yourself; the stem is toxic unless prepared properly.

General Characteristics and Care: It is an excellent choice for coastal landscapes and is highly drought-tolerant and moderately salt-tolerant. It's also cold-hardy and serves as a larval host for the Atala butterfly (*Eumaeus atala*) and the Echo moth (*Sierarctia echo*). There is some debate about its correct botanical name; older University of Florida publications often refer to it as *Zamia floridana*.

Zones: 9A-11. Perfect for those warm, sunny spots in your garden where other plants might struggle.

Exposure: It thrives in full sun, basking in six or more hours of direct sunlight a day, yet it is just as content in partial shade, enjoying 2-6 hours of sunlight.

Soil: Flourishes in moist, well-drained sandy or limestone soils, thriving with or without a humus top layer (an organic component of soil, formed by the decomposition of leaves, plant material, and animal matter.)

Water: It requires regular watering during the growing season (spring to fall).

Fertilizer: A balanced, granular fertilizer is preferred, but a water-soluble one can also be used.

Bloom Period: All year round, it adds unique beauty to the landscape with its brown cones.

Flower Color: No flowers, instead it produces a distinctive brown cone, adding rustic charm.

Size: This compact plant reaches an ideal size of 3 feet by 3 feet, making it perfect for smaller gardens or as a striking accent in larger landscapes.

Toxicity: Its seeds, sap, and stems are toxic to humans and pets if ingested, with symptoms including vomiting, dark stools, and stomach pain. Just 1-2 seeds can be fatal, so handle with care and keep away from pets and children.

Pruning: Requires minimal maintenance; trimming is unnecessary and detracts from its natural beauty. Let it grow naturally to enjoy its graceful elegance.

Sources: <https://easywaytogarden.com/how-to-grow-care-for-coontie-palm/>;
<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/zamia-integrifolia/>; <https://www.wilcoxnursery.com/uncategorized/coontie-zamia-integrifolia/>

COREOPSIS
(Coreopsis verticillata)
Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: Found primarily in East-central United states.

Overview: Coreopsis known as “Whorled Tickseed” or “Threadleaf Coreopsis” is a charming rhizomatous perennial known for its abundance of vibrant golden-yellow blooms. Celebrated as a beloved garden flower since the 19th century, this plant is a magnet for bees, butterflies, and other pollinators, making it an excellent choice for any pollinator-friendly garden.

General Characteristics and Care: The delicate blossoms gracefully rise above the foliage on slender stems, adorned with fine, dark-green leaves divided into thread-like segments. Forming a rounded, airy clump, its handsome and weatherproof foliage makes it a standout in the garden. Heat, humidity, and drought tolerant, this resilient plant adds a cheerful splash of color and a delicate texture to any landscape. Perfect for borders, naturalized areas, and in swathes, it provides a long season of color.

Zones: Hardy in USDA Zones 2–11.

Exposure: Thrives in full sun but can tolerate part shade, ensuring versatility in garden placement.

Soil: Prefers dry to medium-wet, well-drained soil, adapting well to various soil types.

Water: Regular watering is essential to keep the soil evenly moist (but not soggy) until the plants are well established.

Fertilizer: Fertilizing can cause disproportionate growth, with the plant focusing more on stem and leaf development rather than producing buds.

Bloom Period: Blooms from June to August, bringing summer gardens to life with its bright flowers.

Flower Color: The blooms are a radiant yellow, adding a sunny touch to any garden.

Size: Grows up to 30-36 inches tall (75-90 cm) and 18-24 inches wide (45-60 cm), spreading slowly by rhizomes and freely self-seeding in the landscape.

Toxicity: It is not known to cause harm to humans or pets.

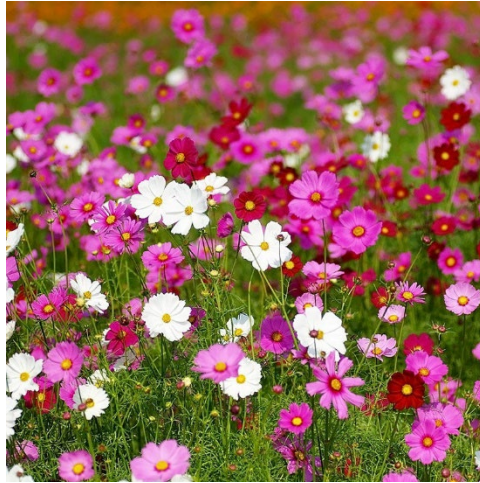
Pruning: To encourage continuous blooming, trim the plant during the growing season, staggering sections of your coreopsis patch weekly for a sustained floral display.

Sources: <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/coreopsis-verticillata>;

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coreopsis_verticillata; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/coreopsis-verticillata/>;

<https://greg.app/plant-care/coreopsis-verticillata>; https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=cove5

COSMOS
(Cosmos bipinnatus)
Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the Americas.

Overview: Cosmos, or “Cosmea”, is an annual that is often considered half-hardy, although plants may reappear via self-sowing for several years. This vibrant and easy-to-grow plant is a favorite in many gardens due to its long blooming period and minimal maintenance requirements.

General Characteristics and Care: Cosmos produces medium-sized flowers and is usually raised as an ornamental plant. It has also been used in traditional herbal remedies for various ailments such as jaundice, intermittent fever, and splenomegaly. Studies have shown the flowers exhibit antioxidant activities and antigenotoxic effects, particularly in different colors like white, pink, orange, and violet.

Zones: Can be grown in USDA hardiness zones 2 - 11.

Exposure: Prefer full sun and will thrive in areas with at least 6 hours of direct sunlight per day.

Soil: It likes well-drained soil. They thrive in soil that is not too rich, as nutrient-rich soil will encourage foliage growth at the expense of blooms.

Water: Do not require frequent watering once established but benefit from occasional deep watering during periods of drought or hot weather.

Fertilizer: When planted in the garden, they generally do not require fertilizer. However, if grown in containers, they can benefit from fertilization every two weeks using an all-purpose garden fertilizer to promote optimal flowering.

Bloom Period: Cosmos will begin blooming in summer and continue to produce blooms through the fall.

Flower Color: They produce large, daisy-like flowers in a variety of colors, including pink, white, red, orange, and yellow.

Size: Cosmos typically grow to a height of 2-5 feet (60 to 180 cm).

Toxicity: Not only non-toxic for humans and animals, they are even edible and can add a refined touch to various dishes, such as salads.

Pruning: Regular deadheading of spent blooms can help encourage continued blooming and prolong the overall bloom season. Pinch off spent flowers or use sharp pruning shears to remove them.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmos_bipinnatus; <https://www.gardenia.net/guide/cosmos-plant-care-and-growing-guide>; <https://www.americanmeadows.com/product/wildflower-seeds/cosmos-seeds>; https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23225286_Antioxidative_and_Antigenotoxic_Activity_of_Extracts_from_Cosmos_Cosmos_bipinnatus_Flowers

CRINUM LILY ‘AMERICUM’
(*Crinum Americanum*)
Amaryllidaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the southeastern United States.

Overview: Commonly known as “bog lily”, “seven sisters”, and “Florida swamp lily”, this plant is not a true lily. It is an aquatic angiosperm with majestic, bold, and fragrant lily-like flowers, imposing foliage, and a robust constitution.

General Characteristics and Care: This plant boasts sweetly fragrant umbels of 2-6 starbursts of white petals, sometimes with a pink blush, adorned with remarkably long purple stamens. They are known for their resilience and beauty.

Zones: Crinum thrive in USDA Zones 8 through 11, where they can bask in the warmth and humidity they so love.

Exposure: They grow best in partial shade, although they tolerate most light conditions. In full sun, they appreciate shade in the afternoon to thrive optimally.

Soil: During the warm growing season, keep the well-draining soil moist. Throughout the rest of the year, the soil can be drier. It thrives in moist soil around ponds but is also tolerant of dry, sandy soil, making it drought-resistant.

Water: They have average water needs, sufficient for their growth and flowering.

Fertilizer: Crinum do not require fertilizer to grow but benefit from a slow-release balanced fertilizer in early spring, which help them produce more flowers.

Bloom Period: These stunning lilies grace the garden with their large, showy flowers from the balmy days of summer into the cool embrace of fall.

Flower Color: Large, lily-like flowers with long petals range from white to blush pink, complemented by striking purple stamens.

Size: They can grow to a height of 25 inches (61 cm) to 4 feet (1.2 m).

Toxicity: While many *Crinum* species are used medicinally, the swamp lily is marginally poisonous if ingested. This includes all parts of the plant, from the bulb to the flowers.

Pruning: After the flowers fade, pinch them off to maintain the plant's appearance. Trimming any dead or damaged leaves and snipping off the stem at its base after the blooming season is all the maintenance required.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crinum_americanum; <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/crinum-americanum>; <https://www.gchouston.org/bulb-plant-mart/crinum-americanum/>; <https://www.plantdelights.com/products/crinum-americanum-st-marks>; <https://pondinformer.com/swamp-lily-crinum-americanum/>; <https://www.canarius.com/en/plants/crinum-americanum.html>; <https://www.bhg.com/gardening/plant-dictionary/bulb/crinum-lily/>; https://www.picturethisai.com/wiki/Crinum_americanum.html; https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=cram2; <https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=275728&isprofile=1&gen=Crinum>; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/crinum-americanum/>

CROTON (various)
(*Croton* spp.)
Euphorbiaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Malaysia, the Pacific Islands, and northern Australia.

Overview: *Croton* is an extensive plant genus in the spurge family. The plants of this genus were described and introduced to Europeans by Georg Eberhard Rumphius. The common names for this genus are Rushfoil and Croton, but the latter also refers to *Codiaeum variegatum*. The generic name comes from the Greek κρότος (*krótos*), which means "tick" and refers to the shape of the seeds of certain species. *C. tiglium* oil has been used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat severe constipation or heal lesions and is used as a purgative. Wang Haogu first observed that croton seeds could also be used to treat diarrhea. In the Amazon, the red latex from the species *C. lechleri*, known as *sangre de drago* (dragon's blood), is used as a "liquid bandage" as well as for other medicinal purposes, by native peoples.

General Characteristics and Care: If your winters are mild enough to plant croton in the landscape, you can grow it outdoors. Croton needs sun but does not do well in the scorching sun, so choose a location with partial or dappled shade. Single specimens add a splash of color to the back of a perennial flowerbed. A line of croton planted alongside a walkway, driveway, or pool makes an attractive, cheerful hedge or barrier.

Zones: USDA 10-11 (tropical).

Exposure: Part Sun, full sun.

Soil: Make sure the soil provides excellent drainage and has a pH between 4.5 and 6.5 (acidic).

Water: Crotons should be kept evenly moist during summer but need reduced watering during winter.

Fertilizer: Croton only requires occasional fertilization in the spring and summer.

Bloom Period: Crotons rarely bloom but when they do it is in late summer to fall.

Flower Color: White. Known for its multi-colored foliage: blue/green, chartreuse/gold, purple/burgundy.

Size: 1 to 8 feet tall; 1 to 6 feet wide.

Toxicity: All parts of the plant are toxic to humans and pets. Many plants in this family are poisonous.

Pruning: Not normally pruned although it can be shaped. If it gets too large, it can be cut back.

Sources: <https://terragreenhouses.com/product/croton/>; [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croton_\(plant\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croton_(plant));
<https://www.bhg.com/gardening/plant-dictionary/houseplant/croton/>; <https://plantura.garden/uk/houseplants/croton/croton-overview>

CROWN OF THORNS ‘Pink Cadillac’
(*Euphorbia milii*)
Euphorbiaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Madagascar.

Overview: Crown of thorns is popular as a houseplant and is grown in warm climates as a garden shrub. The species name commemorates Baron Milius, once Governor of Réunion, who introduced the species to France in 1821. The native Malagasy name for this plant is *songosongo* also applied to several other *Euphorbia* species. It is imagined that the species was introduced to the Middle East in ancient times, and legend associates it with the crown of thorns worn by Jesus.

General Characteristics and Care: The plant itself has proven to be an effective molluscicide and a natural alternative to pest control. The World Health Organization has recommended the usage of *Euphorbia milii* in aiding snail control. Schistosomiasis is an infectious disease from freshwater parasites, carried by snails. Extracts from the plant are used to control the snail population to avoid getting infected from this parasite. *Euphorbia milii* can be propagated from cuttings. *E. milii* is not hardy and does not tolerate temperatures below 10°C (50°F).

Zones: USDA 9-11 (Tropical).

Exposure: Likes full sun. In hot summer climates, provide the plant with midday shade and moderate moisture for better flower bloom.

Soil: Crown of Thorns grows best in dry to medium moisture, well-drained soils. Clay and rocky outcrops.

Water: Allow the soil to dry completely between waterings; plants are susceptible to root rot if the soil is constantly wet. As a drought-tolerant plant, it can go longer periods without water, so it's better to underwater than overwater.

Fertilizer: A 0-10-10 NPK ratio is ideal for blooming Crown of Thorns. Fertilize every 4-8 weeks in growing season; less in winter.

Bloom Period: The plant thrives between spring and summer but produces flowers all year round. The long spines are dangerous to inattentive gardeners, children, and pets.

Flower Color: The flowers are small, subtended by a pair of conspicuous petal-like bracts, variably red, pink or white, up to 12 mm (0.47 in) broad.

Size: It grows to 1.8 m (5 ft 11 in) tall, with densely spiny stems. The straight, slender spines, up to 3 cm (1.2 in) long, help it scramble over other plants.

Toxicity: It is very toxic to domesticated animals such as, horses, sheep, cats and dogs. For humans it is mildly toxic and only acts as an irritant. The white latex sap causes a mild poisonous reaction when in contact with skin or eyes; wear gloves when working with this plant.

Pruning: Most *Euphorbia milii* have a natural, branching growth habit, so extensive pruning isn't generally needed.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euphorbia_milii#Cultivation.;
[https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/euphorbia-milii/;](https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/euphorbia-milii/)[https://easyplant.com/care/crown-of-thorns.;](https://easyplant.com/care/crown-of-thorns;)

DIANTHUS (Pinks) ‘Firewitch’

(*Dianthus* spp.)
Caryophyllaceae



Geographical Origin: Native mainly to Europe and Asia, with a few species in north Africa and in southern Africa, and one species in arctic North America.

Overview: Also known as “Pinks,” this hardy, adaptable plant ranges from low-growing annuals to taller perennials (such as Carnations). Ancient Greek botanist Theophrastus (c.371–c.287 B.C.) gave the *Dianthus* genus its name: “divine flower” (*dios* + *anthos*). Ever since, gardeners have been smitten with these plants’ charms: a sweet and spicy fragrance and lovely fringed blossoms. They were very popular in Tudor and Edwardian times when they were called by picturesque names like gillyflower, pheasant’s ear, and sops-in-wine. Colonists brought their favorite dianthus with them to the New World as early as 1676.

General Characteristics and Care: Dianthus are popular for many reasons. Besides being hardy and adaptable, they are also long blooming and will flower prolifically through the summer season if you deadhead the faded flowers. They grow in tidy rounded mounds. And their fragrance is similar to cloves. They also attract butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinators to the garden. They are deer resistant.

Zones: USDA Zones 3-10. These are cool weather plants.

Exposure: Dianthus demand full sun (they fail to thrive in shade).

Soil: They need well-draining soil (standing water will rot the roots). Dianthus likes slightly alkaline soil, around pH 6.0 to 7.0.

Water: Water only when soil is dry and be careful not to overwater.

Fertilizer: Fertilize a few times during the growing season with a balanced fertilizer (equal amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium) or a phosphate-rich tomato fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Spring and Summer.

Flower Color: Pinks come in many colors: intense pink, white, lavender, yellow, red, and bicolor.

Size: Most varieties are 10 to 20 inches tall, but *Dianthus* varieties range from annual creeping ground covers to 24-inch (or longer) long-stemmed perennials such as carnations, suitable for cutting.

Toxicity: Plants in the *Dianthus* genus, which includes Pinks, Carnations, and Sweet William, are toxic to pets.

Pruning: If you deadhead, *Dianthus* will rebloom from Spring and sometimes until Fall frost.

Sources: <https://www.almanac.com/plant/dianthus.>; [https://www.bhg.com/gardening/plant-dictionary/perennial/dianthus/.](https://www.bhg.com/gardening/plant-dictionary/perennial/dianthus/)

DOROTHEANTHUS 'Mezoo Red' (Livingstone Daisy)
(Dorotheanthus [Claretum] bellidiformis 'Mezoo')
Aizoaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to western South Africa.

Overview: A hardy foliage plant perfect for any garden, *Dorotheanthus Mezoo* is both low maintenance and tolerant of heat and drought, so it adapts to both sunny and shaded areas. With variegated leaves, *Dorotheanthus Mezoo* will add interesting visual textures to your porch or balcony. It will spread in the garden but is not particularly invasive.

General Characteristics and Care: Leaves are flat and rounded at the tip, with notably bladder shaped cells on the leaf surface that give the leaves a reflective quality. These cells are used to store water, which classifies the plant as a succulent. The plant usually forms a stout groundcover, but its flowers may reach up to 25 cm (10 in).

Zones: A tender perennial that is winter hardy to USDA Zones 9-10.

Exposure: *Dorotheanthus Mezoo* will grow best in full to partial sun but will also thrive in shade.

Soil: It is adapted to disturbed sand, such as found on riverbanks or desert dunes; the small flat seeds easily slip deeper in loose sand out of the summer sun. It is also found on clay slopes, limestone ridges, and granite outcrops.

Water: Avoid overwatering, but do not allow soils to completely dry out.

Fertilizer: Fertilize once a month using a liquid fertilizer or add a slow-release fertilizer to the soil.

Bloom Period: Summer

Flower Color: Small, pink.

Size: Height: 6-8"; Spread: 18-20"

Toxicity: not harmful to humans or pets.

Pruning: To encourage bushier growth and branching, pinch back growth every so often. Increase flower production by deadheading spent flowers.

Sources: <https://mossgreenhouses.com/product/dorotheanthus-mezoo/>;<https://bloomscape.com/plant-care-guide/mezoo/>;<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=273399>.
; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claretum_bellidiforme.;
https://www.rainyside.com/plant_gallery/annuals/Dorotheanthus_bellidiformis.html

DRIFT ROSE
(*Rosa* hybrid 'Drift')
Rosaceae



Geographical Origin: It's believed that they originated in Central Asia, spreading through northern Europe over centuries. The cultivation of roses and different varieties started in Central Asia around 5000 years ago.

Overview: Drift Roses are a cross between full-size groundcover roses and miniature roses. From the former, they kept toughness, disease resistance and winter hardiness. From the miniatures, they inherited their well-managed size and repeat-blooming nature. Many economically important products come from the Rosaceae, including various edible fruits, such as apples, pears, quinces, apricots, plums, cherries, peaches, raspberries, blackberries, loquats, strawberries, rose hips, hawthorns, and almonds.

General Characteristics and Care: Although newer than Knockout roses, Drift roses are quickly becoming a gardener's favorite. Drift roses also bloom nonstop and don't need to be sprayed for the disease. Drift roses are fast-growing, but they don't grow as large and have graceful forms. Plant them any time of year, but spring is best to allow them to become established before cool weather comes.

Zones: Roses are grown best in Zones 5-8. Certain hybrid varieties, such as Drift Roses, will grow well in Florida.

Exposure: Roses need at least 6 hours of sun per day to bloom well.

Soil: Roses need a soil pH of between 6 and 7 for healthy growth. Ideally, the pH level for roses should be around 6.5.

Water: Being as low maintenance as they are, Drift roses will grow in most soil conditions you plant them in, but they do prefer moist, well-drained soil.

Fertilizer: Use a high-nitrogen fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Roses tend to bloom from late spring to early autumn. Some bloom only once, and others continuously bloom throughout the season.

Flower Color: Drift roses come in a multitude of colors.

Size: They grow only 18" tall and about 3 feet wide.

Toxicity: Roses are not harmful to humans or pets.

Pruning: Roses that flower only once in a season should be pruned within a month after flowering and roses that flower several times during the season should be pruned in late March or early April once the buds start to break.

Sources: <https://www.driftroses.com/collection.>; <https://www.southernliving.com/garden/grumpy-gardener/drift-roses.>; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=geographical+origin+of+roses.>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosaceae>.

DUCK POTATO (Broadleaf Arrowhead)

(*Sagittaria latifolia*)

Alismataceae



Geographical Origin: Native to southern Canada and most of the contiguous United States, as well as Mexico, Central America, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Cuba. It is also naturalized in Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Bhutan, Australia and much of Europe.

Overview: *Sagittaria latifolia* is a plant found in shallow wetlands and is sometimes known as Broadleaf Arrowhead, Duck-Potato, Indian Potato, or Wapato. This plant produces edible tubers that have traditionally been extensively used by Native Americans. Duck potato gets its name from the potato-like corms that sometimes form. Corms are bulbous stem parts that grow underground. Duck potato is easily recognized by its large, firm, lance-shaped leaves.

General Characteristics and Care: The taste is like potatoes and chestnuts, and they can be prepared in the same fashions: roasting, frying, boiling, and so on. They can also be sliced and dried to prepare a flour. Other edible parts include late summer buds and fruits. Medicinally, the Maidu of California used an infusion of arrowhead roots to clean and treat wounds.

Zones: Plants are hardy in USDA Zones 4 through 11.

Exposure: Full sun.

Soil: Prefers standing water, but also handles wet soil for extended periods. Likes a pH ranging from 6.0 to 6.5 but is tolerant of less adequate conditions.

Water: Duck potato thrives in fresh water 6 to 12 inches deep.

Fertilizer: Fertilize with decomposed manure.

Bloom Period: Duck Potatoes bloom between July and September.

Flower Color: Duck potato flowers are showy and white, with 3 petals. Flowers extend on thick stalks that are often a foot or more above the leaves.

Size: Duck potato leaves are commonly 4 inches wide and up to 2 feet long. The plant will grow from 1' to 4' tall.

Toxicity: Non-toxic to humans and pets.

Pruning: Regular pruning of broadleaf arrowhead will promote more blooms rather than harm the plant. There are two main pruning techniques for this plant. Deadheading involves removing spent flower heads to concentrate nutrients for other flowers and improve flowering.

Additionally, removing yellow and diseased leaves enhances plant ventilation, light penetration, and overall growth.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=duck+potato;>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sagittaria_latifolia.;](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sagittaria_latifolia.) <https://greg.app/broadleaf-arrowhead-toxic-to-humans/>

DURANTA (Gold Mound)

(*Duranta erecta*)

Verbenaceae



Geographical Origin: Native from south Florida to Mexico and South America.

Overview: Common characteristics of the *Duranta erecta* species are attractive evergreen foliage with rounded or oval leaves about 2 inches long; some varieties have gold or variegated leaves. IN full sun, the leaves may turn a bright, acid yellow. It delivers scores of pale blue, white, or violet blossom clusters for the entire growing season and develops drooping clusters of yellow or orange berries in the fall. Birds eagerly eat the berries. Butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds visit the flowers for their nectar.

General Characteristics and Care: The Duranta likes it hot; even triple-digit temperatures won't slow it down. If you are growing the plant in a container, bring it indoors when temperatures dip below 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Duranta plants do well in both dry and humid conditions. They also tolerate the salty air of beach climates.

Zones: Zone 10-11 hardiness.

Exposure: Full sun.

Soil: Rich loam; tolerates rocky soil; pH acidic, neutral, alkaline.

Water: Water on a regular schedule, providing at least 1 inch per week; becomes somewhat drought resistant once well established.

Fertilizer: Fertilizing is optional and unnecessary; if using fertilizer, opt for a slow-release type to encourage flowering.

Bloom Period: Spring, summer, fall.

Flower Color: Blue, purple, white.

Size: Duranta typically grows 2 to 4 feet tall in regions where it dies back in the winter, but it can achieve heights of 18 feet in warm winter environments.

Toxicity: Toxic to humans and dogs.

Pruning: In warm climates, Duranta, with its dense foliage, can be pruned into topiaries. It needs frequent pruning to maintain a compact shape. Grows fast and can overgrow a location if not pruned with some regularity.

Sources: [https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=duranta.](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=duranta.;);
<https://www.thespruce.com/duranta-plant-care-and-growing-guide-4684565.>;
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duranta.>

DUSTY MILLER (Silver Ragwort)
(*Senecio cineraria* [*Jacobaea maritima*])
Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the Mediterranean region.

Overview: Every flower garden needs a foliage foil to contrast its blooms, and Dusty Miller stands out as a neutral go-to plant for any color scheme. Its silvery leaves look stunning when paired with cool purple and blue flowers, and it also pairs well with hot red and orange flowers. Even white flowers benefit from the glow of dusty miller's leaves in moon gardens.

General Characteristics and Care: Dusty miller is an herbaceous perennial often used as a bedding annual. Dusty miller flowers are inconspicuous, but the foliage has tiny fine hairs that give them a wooly appearance. Once established, a dusty miller plant doesn't need much care or maintenance. Set it up in the right conditions and do a little watering and pruning to keep it happy.

Zones: Dusty miller's temperature tolerance spans zones 8 to 11, but this tender perennial sometimes survives the winter in slightly colder climates.

Exposure: This sun lover prefers full sun exposure and might get leggy if placed in a shady spot.

Soil: Dusty miller needs soil that drains very well. It can grow in poor soils but prefers moderately rich soil. Excess moisture will cause root rot, but it will tolerate dry conditions and even some drought.

Water: Provide adequate moisture after planting and as roots get established, and then only as needed. Dusty miller tolerates drought well.

Fertilizer: Fertilizing isn't necessary for this light feeder. If the soil is very poor, add organic material or a balanced fertilizer when planting dusty miller.

Bloom Period: Grown for its foliage. Blooms in Summer.

Flower Color: Dusty miller's tiny bright yellow flowers contrast its silvery leaves, but to keep this plant compact, you might want to *remove its flowering stalks before the buds open*.

Size: Height:6-12 inches; Spread: 6-12 inches.

Toxicity: Dusty miller is toxic to humans, dogs, and cats.

Pruning: Pruning is optional but remove yellowing leaves or floral sprigs to keep this plant looking full and healthy. Dusty miller grows well in the ground or many types of containers. Its appearance varies based on the variety; 'Silverado' or 'Silver Lace' have fine, delicate feathery leaves, while 'Cirrus' has broader leaves.

Sources: <https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-grow-and-care-for-dusty-miller-4689234>.;
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/foilage/dusty-miller/growing-dusty-miller.htm>.

DWARF BAMBOO

(*Bambusa multiplex*)

Poaceae



Geographical Origin: Asia

Overview: *Bambusa multiplex* is a clumping 'dwarf' bamboo and does not run so is not invasive. There are many cultivars. This plant has upright branches and is slightly arching. It is moderately salt tolerant. *B. multiplex* forms a medium-sized clump with slender culms (stems) and dense foliage. This bamboo is suitable for hedges and live fences since the stems and foliage form a dense growth that create an effective barrier.

General Characteristics and Care: Bamboo plants are relatively free from problems and only require some maintenance. *Bambusa Multiplex*, also known as Multiplex, Multiplex Hedge and Hedge Bamboo is one of our most reliable, hardy and vigorous growing bamboo varieties. However, in order to keep your bamboo looking good year-round, an annual trimming is in order.

Zones: USDA Plant Hardiness Zone:6a-9b.

Exposure: It can withstand some shade but likes full sun.

Soil: It prefers a loamy acidic, high organic matter, moist soil. Acid (<6.0).

Water: Regarding watering, more water means more growth. However, standing water may result in rotting of the rhizome of the bamboo plant, which causes the plant to die.

Fertilizer: Feed in-ground plants monthly, from March to October, with a high-nitrogen fertilizer or lawn fertilizer. Using a balanced fertilizer throughout the growing season helps plants to provide nutrients to the roots and keeps the bamboo healthy.

Bloom Period: N/A

Flower Color: Flower Inflorescence: Insignificant

Size: Height: 10 ft.-25 ft.; Width: 4 ft.-6 ft.

Toxicity: *Bambusa multiplex* 'Alphonse Karr' is toxic, causing nausea, vomiting, and injury.

Pruning: Prune bamboo any time during the year but prevent accidentally removing emerging shoots during the growing season. Much of the pruning needed for bamboo plants is to maintain shape and appearance. Start by removing older, dead, or unsightly culms with a saw or sharp garden shears. Remove these unwanted culms to the ground or cut above the node if you are pruning for appearance.

Sources: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/bambusa-multiplex/>;

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bambusa_multiplex;

<https://www.southernliving.com/garden/perennials/how-to-grow-bamboo>;

DWARF FOXTAIL (Chenille Plant)
(Acalypha hispida)
Euphorbiaceae



Geographical Origin: The plant originated in tropical Asia, specifically Malesia and Papuaia, but has become naturalized to multiple countries in North America, including the United States, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Belize.

Overview: *Acalypha hispida* is also known as Philippine medusa and red hot cat tail in English. It will grow as a ground cover in warmer climates and is also cultivated as a house plant because of its attractiveness and brilliantly colored, furry flowers. The Latin specific epithet *hispida* means “bristly”, referring to the pendent flowers which vaguely resemble brushes. A member of the spurge family, is named after the French word for caterpillar. Its long and fuzzy crimson blooms provide textural interest to a sunny flower garden or a homegrown bouquet.

General Characteristics and Care: The plant is dioecious, and therefore there are distinct male and female members of the species. The plant will spread rapidly in warm climates and can be invasive. The plant itself is very resistant to diseases, but with a certain vulnerability to aphids, which can colonize it and kill it.

Zones: USDA cold hardiness zones 10 and 11.

Exposure: Full to partial sun.

Soil: Prefers Sandy, clay, loamy soils. pH acidic to neutral.

Water: Chenille plants prefer consistently moist soil but not soggy.

Fertilizer: During the growing season (spring to early autumn), apply a balanced liquid fertilizer every 4–6 weeks to encourage lush growth and vibrant blossoms.

Bloom Period: Spring, summer, fall, winter.

Flower Color: The female plant bears pistillate flowers which are 0.7 millimeters long and range in color from purple to bright red, and grow in clusters along catkins that can grow up to fifty centimeters (19.5 inches) or more in length.

Size: It can grow to be 5–12 feet (1.5–3.7 m) tall and have a spread of 3–6 feet (0.91–1.83 m).

Toxicity: The clear latex is poisonous and can irritate the skin and mucous membranes (signs of intoxication do not appear until massive amounts of plants have been absorbed).

Pruning: Prune it back regularly as it grows quickly and can overtake other plants in a bed.

Sources: [https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=chenille+plant.;](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=chenille+plant;)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acalypha_hispida.; <https://www.thespruce.com/chenille-plant-1315697.;>

ECHEVERIA (succulent)
(Echeveria subsessilis)
Crassulaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to semi-desert areas of Central America, Mexico, and northwestern South America.

Overview: Echeverias are known for their rosette-shaped leaves and vibrant colors. Echeverias come in multiple varieties, each with its own unique leaf shape, color, and texture. Echeveria plants are loved for their ability to thrive indoors and outdoors, making them a versatile choice for succulent enthusiasts.

General Characteristics and Care: The leaves of Echeveria are thick and fleshy, often in rosette shapes; and are known for their beautiful, intricate patterns on their leaves. The numerous echeveria varieties are generally blue-gray or gray green in color. The waxy leaves of Echeveria plants can also be green or purple.

Zones: Hardiness Zones 9, 10, 11.

Exposure: Full sun, partial shade.

Soil: Prefer well-draining soil such as that for cactus with a pH of 6.0, or slightly acidic.

Water: Watering needs are low.

Fertilizer: Fertilize once a year during the growing season in the spring with a balanced fertilizer NPK (5-10-5).

Bloom Period: Spring, summer.

Flower Color: The flowers of the Echeveria succulents come in vibrant hues like red, orange, and yellow with a bell-shaped appearance on a long stalk. Echeveria plants come in a variety of colors, including green, pink, purple, and blue.

Size: 8 inches tall, 1 foot wide.

Toxicity: Friendly to humans, friendly to pets.

Pruning: The optimal period for giving this succulent a trim is at the start of its growing season. This typically aligns with spring, when the plant awakens from its winter rest and is eager to grow. Pruning during this time encourages a burst of fresh, healthy foliage.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Echeveria+succulent.>; <https://planetdesert.com/collections/echeveria-succulent.>; <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/echeveria-succulent-guide.>

ELEPHANT EAR 'California'
(*Allocasia californica*)
Araceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Southeast Asia.

Overview: Also known as Dwarf Elephant Ear, California Upright Elephant Ear, *Alocasia gageana* 'California', *Alocasia odora* 'California', and *Alocasia californica*. Will survive hard freezes and is easily dug up and overwintered as a bulb/corm farther north where the ground freezes. It's also called dwarf elephant ear, which is a misnomer. Although "California" has 15-inch leaves while the full-sized varieties of Alocasias can have leaves up to 5 feet wide, the clumping nature of this plant makes up for the lack of leaf size.

General Characteristics and Care: In Florida, *Alocasia* "California" is a veritable haven for treefrogs and lizards as well, that savor the pools of water that collect in the leaf axils. When they have the right conditions, *Alocasia* is easy to care for and can grow quickly in the warm summer months and produce a new leaf every week.

Zones: USDA 10–12.

Exposure: They can tolerate dim light but cannot withstand direct sunlight.

Soil: Loose, well-draining soil or crumbly loam. Slightly acidic (5.5 to 6.5).

Water: A site with plenty of moisture is best for dwarf elephant ear, but they will also rebound from a short dry spell. They are a flood tolerant tropical.

Fertilizer: The best fertilizers for *Alocasia* plants are those that are balanced, water-soluble, and contain a ratio of 20-20-20.

Bloom Period: Spring and summer.

Flower Color: Light butter yellow. Blooming is rare. Although not grown for their flowers, *Alocasias* do flower, but flowers are unlikely to be seen on plants grown purely indoors. Cut the bloom to redirect energy to leaves for healthier foliage.

Size: A 4' tall plant that in more tropical climates forms a thick above-ground trunk, which supports the upright held 2' long, scalloped-edged leaves.

Toxicity: They can be harmful if the plant material is chewed on or swallowed. These plants contain oxalate crystals that can cause mouth pain, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. They should be kept away from children and pets.

Pruning: Prune *Alocasia* only to remove damaged, dying, or dead foliage.

Sources: <https://greg.app/plant-care/alocasia-gageana-california;>
<http://www.therainforestgarden.com/2010/03/alocasia-california.html;> [https://www.thespruce.com/grow-alocasia-indoors-1902735.](https://www.thespruce.com/grow-alocasia-indoors-1902735)

FAN FLOWER

(*Scaevola aemula*)

Goodeniaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Australia

Overview: Even if you're a seasoned gardener, you may have never heard of Fan Flower (*Scaevola aemula*). This sun-lover is a relative newcomer to gardens in the U.S., but it's catching on quickly because of its beauty and ability to bloom tirelessly even during the long days of summer. Attracts butterflies, bees, and other pollinating insects.

General Characteristics and Care: From spring well into fall, scaevola plants put on a perpetual display of delicate flowers with tiny petals arranged in a fanlike pattern, giving the flowers a wonderfully exotic look. Even better, fan flower is tough and easy-going and will continue to bloom even when neglected. Drought and heat tolerant once established. Flowers are self-cleaning, making deadheading unnecessary.

Zones: These plants will prosper in Zones 10 and 11.

Exposure: Full sun to part shade.

Soil: Plant in well-drained garden soil. Fan flowers aren't particular about soil type or pH, but they won't tolerate soggy conditions. Because fan flowers are drought-tolerant, they are a good choice for low-water gardens. They also do well in coastal gardens because they aren't bothered by salty air.

Water: Fan flowers are very drought-tolerant, so only water when the soil feels dry.

Fertilizer: To coax the most prolific bloom production from fan flower, fertilize your plants regularly using a water-soluble fertilizer or a slow-release granular fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Late spring into fall.

Flower Color: Blue, pink, white, and purple, with bright yellow-and-white throats. Although each bloom has only five petals (thus the common name "half flower"), the flowers grow in clusters around the stems, creating whorls of color.

Size: These plants are mat-forming and grow to a height of 6 inches and spreading up to 3 feet in width.

Toxicity: *Scaevola* has no toxic effects reported.

Pruning: Pruning and pinching of tip growth may be carried out to shape the plant.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scaevola_aemula;

<https://www.gardendesign.com/annuals/scaevola.html>.; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-l-d&q=fan+flower+toxicity>;

FERN 'Foxtail'
(Asparagus densiflorus 'Meyril')
Asperagaceae



Geographical Origin: It is native to southern Africa, from Mozambique to South Africa, but is widely cultivated.

Overview: *Asparagus densiflorus*, or the Foxtail Fern or Plume Fern, is a variable, evergreen-perennial plant related to cultivated, edible asparagus. It is not a true fern. Just as its common name describes, Foxtail Fern, this variety features foliage closely resembling a fox's bushy tail. Its long upright stems begin just below the soil surface and are filled with light green needle-like leaves.

General Characteristics and Care: Foxtail ferns attract birds, are low maintenance, have year-round interest, and tolerate light frost. In its native habitat, asparagus fern is found in shady, sandy sites, including coastal dunes, open rocky places and woods. Where it has escaped from cultivation, it is generally found along shady roadsides and invading woodlands or rainforests where it displaces native vegetation and prevents native species from reestablishing. It is considered an invasive weed in some locations, including Florida, Texas, and Hawaii in the US.

Zones: USDA Zones 9-11.

Exposure: Full to partial sun.

Soil: It does best in moist soils rich in organic matter but tolerates almost any conditions and is fairly drought tolerant once established. A slightly acidic pH of 6.5 to 6.8 is ideal.

Water: Water regularly after planting to encourage quick establishment, then reduce frequency.

Fertilizer: Feed asparagus fern with liquid or water-soluble all-purpose plant food diluted to half strength. In the spring, fertilize the plant monthly.

Bloom Period: Summer

Flower Color: This fern has tiny white flowers that emerge midway through the summer season and are followed by green berries that turn red as they ripen.

Size: They grow up to 2 feet tall and 4 feet wide.

Toxicity: The berries can cause dermatitis when in contact with skin and gastrointestinal upset if ingested and are toxic to cats and dogs.

Pruning: This plant does not require any pruning. Remove old stems as they dry and turn brown.

Sources: [https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=asparagus+densiflorus](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=asparagus+densiflorus;).; <https://westernstarnurseries.com/plants/asparagus-densiflorus-meyeri/>.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asparagus_densiflorus.;

FIREBUSH
(Hamelia patens)
Rubiaceae



Geographical Origin: American Subtropics and Tropics.

Overview: In Belize, this plant's Mayan name is Ix Canaan, and is also known as "Guardian of the Forest" due to its medicinal properties.

General Characteristics and Care: Despite its somewhat scraggy appearance, this is a valuable garden shrub in warmer climates and even in temperate ones, as long as the soil remains above freezing. The fruits have a refreshing, acidic taste and are also edible by humans; in Mexico, they are made into a fermented drink.

Zones: This bush can be found in zones 9 through 10.

Exposure: The Guardian of the Forest or Firebush grows in full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day) and partial shade areas (direct sunlight only part of the day 2-6 hours).

Soil: This shrub prefers soil with high organic matter and sand and likes good drainage.

Water: The Firebush likes somewhat moist soil that does not flood but can stand soil that isn't wet but not extremely dry.

Fertilizer: If your Firebush is healthy and doing well, it can live happily without fertilizer. If you think your plant could use a little nutrition, you can feed it a couple of times every year in early spring and again in early summer.

Bloom Period: The beautiful red and orange blooms can be seen year-round unless they freeze back.

Flower Color: Firebush's terminal clusters of five-lobed, tubular, bright-red/orange flowers are followed by dark-red berries. The tubular flowers, recruit hummingbirds and butterflies for pollination

Size: The plant grows 3-6 ft. high in the northern part of its range and up to 15 ft. in the southern part.

Toxicity: Firebush is non-toxic. In fact, a syrup derived from the fruit of Firebush is used as a remedy for diarrhea in the West Indies.

Pruning: The Firebush can take hard pruning and consistent pruning to shape it into a bush during the growing season.

Sources: <https://www.wilcoxnursery.com/store/Firebush-p260390260>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamelia_patens; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/hamelia-patens/>;
<https://www.fnps.org/plant/hamelia-patens>;
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/shrubs/firebush/how-to-fertilize-a-firebush.htm>;
https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=hapa3; <https://www.housedigest.com/865438/firebush-everything-you-should-know-before-planting/>;

FLAMING TORCH
(Billbergia pyramidalis)
Bromeliaceae



Geographical Origin: South America and parts of the Caribbean.

Overview: A perennial, clump-forming stemless bromeliad plant, it is adaptable and grows well as a terrestrial or epiphytic plant.

General Characteristics and Care: When on the ground, plants quickly create large clumps, and when planted at the base of a tree, they will slowly climb the trunk.

Zones: This plant does well in zones 9 through 11.

Exposure: It's important that it has water in its rosette cup, and that it doesn't get too much sun, which may scorch its leaves so the Flaming Torch is happiest in part shade.

Soil: The species is found in moist humus-rich soils or in composted leaf mould on the ground in humid areas, as well as on rocks under shady forest trees. It is epiphytic, so it does not require soil, but it can be planted in well-drained soil, a soil-less substrate, or on trees. It needs acidic to alkaline soil. (pH 6.0-8.0).

Water: Absorbs water through its cup formed in the center of the rosette. This cup should be flushed out every once in a while, to avoid stagnation and bad odor.

Fertilizer: A slow-release fertilizer may be applied to the base of the plants in spring.

Bloom Period: The thick, red, or pink brush-shaped flowers on an individual plant last less than one month, but nearly all plants will come into bloom at the same time in the late summer or early autumn.

Flower Color: The scarlet-colored inflorescences are made up of red, tube-shaped flowers with violet or yellow highlights.

Size: This plant can grow to about 12-18 inches in height and 18-24 inches in width.

Toxicity: It is not toxic to humans and animals on contact or if ingested.

Pruning: Prune in late winter to early spring by removing dead leaves and old flower stalks to encourage growth and air circulation.

Sources: <https://assessment.ifas.ufl.edu/assessments/billbergia-pyramidalis/>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billbergia_pyramidalis; <https://www.pslbg.org/flaming-torch.html>;
[https://www.picturethisai.com/wiki/Billbergia_pyramidalis.html#:~:text=Pruning%3A%20Flaming%20torch%20produces%20eye,encourage%20growth%20and%20air%20circulation.](https://www.picturethisai.com/wiki/Billbergia_pyramidalis.html#:~:text=Pruning%3A%20Flaming%20torch%20produces%20eye,encourage%20growth%20and%20air%20circulation.;); <https://www.monstera-app.com/en/plants/varieties/billbergia-pyramidalis-01HX97RXNBGKNV9HFR5R9S7C29#:~:text=Despite%20its%20nickname%20of%20%22flaming,on%20contact%20or%20if%20ingested.>

GARDENIA 'Radicans Dwarf'
(*Gardenia augusta* 'Radicans')
Rubiaceae



Geographical Origin: China

Overview: This Gardenia will add a touch of romance and beauty to your landscape. Use the Gardenia Radicans as an accent, border, ground cover, or container plant.

General Characteristics and Care: Cooler zones can enjoy this beautiful flowering evergreen by planting in containers and moving them inside during the winter.

Gardenias are heat and drought-tolerant plants that are low maintenance and disease-resistant.

Zones: This Gardenia is best grown in zones 7b to 10. Gardenias do not tolerate freezing temperatures.

Exposure: Prefers full sun or partial shade but shelter them from frost and cold winds.

Soil: Needs well-drained, neutral-to-acid soils with plenty of added compost or peat moss. Mulch around the root area and do not disturb the roots.

Water: Water weekly and deeply during dry periods, the root ball sometimes dries out despite the surrounding soil being moist, so you can direct the water down the plant stem to saturate the root ball.

Fertilizer: Regular dressings of compost and balanced fertilizer ensure good foliage. You can plant with some general slow-release fertilizer and then, every spring, apply organic fertilizer at a handful per square meter.

Bloom Period: Stunning fragrant blooms emerge in late spring and rebloom throughout summer.

Flower Color: The stunning white blooms of the Gardenia pop over the shiny evergreen foliage.

Size: Small, spreading, evergreen shrub that grows up to 2 feet tall and 3 feet wide.

Toxicity: Gardenias are generally safe and are not considered poisonous to humans, although it is not recommended for ingestion According to the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), *Gardenia jasminoides* is considered toxic to dogs, cats, and horses.

Pruning: This Gardenia is easy to look after, give it a light trim after flowering to promote new bushy growth other than that, pruning should not be required. But they can be cut back hard if need be.

Sources: <https://www.aucklandbotanicgardens.co.nz/plants-for-auckland/plants/gardenia-augusta-radicans/>;
https://www.gardensonline.com.au/gardenshed/plantfinder/show_1711.aspx;
<https://www.plantingtree.com/products/gardenia-radicans>; <https://plantaddicts.com/are-gardenias-poisonous/>

GERANIUM
(*Pelargonium* spp.)
Geraniaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to South Africa

Overview: Geranium is also the botanical name and common name of a separate genus of related plants, also known as cranesbills. Both genera belong to the family Geraniaceae, and Carl Linnaeus originally included all the species in one genus, Geranium; they were later separated into two genera by Charles Louis L'Héritier de Brutelle in 1789.

General Characteristics and Care: *Pelargonium* species are evergreen perennials indigenous to warm temperate and tropical regions of the world, with many species in southern Africa. They are drought and heat-tolerant but can tolerate only minor frosts.

Zones: Geraniums grow in U.S. Department of Agriculture hardiness zones 9 through 12.

Exposure: The *Pelargonium* spp. prefer full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day).

Soil: Geraniums prefer well-draining soil that is slightly alkaline to neutral soil. You can use a high-quality potting mix for container-grown plants or amend garden soil with organic matter to improve drainage.

Water: Geraniums are somewhat drought-tolerant, but they still require regular watering. Allow the soil to dry out slightly between waterings, and then water deeply. Avoid overwatering, as it can lead to root rot.

Fertilizer: To promote healthy growth and abundant flowering, fertilize every 4-6 weeks during the growing season with a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Flowering typically occurs from spring to fall, with some species blooming almost year-round in mild climates.

Flower Color: Geraniums are cherished for their vibrant, colorful flowers that bloom in shades of red, pink, purple, white, and bicolor combinations.

Size: Depending on the species and cultivar, they can vary greatly in size. Dwarf varieties can grow as small as 6 inches tall, while larger types can reach up to 2 feet in height.

Toxicity: Geranium is considered non-toxic to humans but can cause mild irritation if ingested in large quantities. According to the ASPCA, these plants are toxic to cats, dogs, and horses.

Pruning: Regularly deadhead spent flower to encourage continuous blooming. In addition, pinch back new growth to promote bushiness and maintain the desired shape. Prune back leggy or overgrown plants in late winter or early spring.

Sources: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelargonium>; <https://www.gardensbythebay.com.sg/en/learn-with-us/explore-resources/whats-blooming/garden-geranium.html>; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/pelargonium/>; <https://www.gardenia.net/genus/pelargonium-geranium>

GINGER
(Zingiber officinale)
Zingiberaceae



Geographical Origin: Southeast Asia

Overview: Ginger is a flowering plant whose rhizome, ginger root, or ginger, is widely used as a spice and a folk medicine. Ginger has been used in traditional medicine in China, India, and Japan for centuries and as a dietary supplement.

General Characteristics and Care: *Zingiber officinale* is an herbaceous perennial that grows annual pseudostems (false stems made of the rolled bases of leaves) about one meter tall, bearing narrow leaf blades.

Zones: It is hardy only in USDA Zones 8 – 12 but can be grown in containers and moved indoors for the winter in colder climates where the season is too short for the rhizomes to mature.

Exposure: In a cool climate, the plants do well in full sun; in more southern locations, the plants may need partial shade.

Soil: Ginger can be grown in a variety of soil types but does best in soil that is rich in organic matter.

Water: Water regularly, but do not allow the soil or planting medium to remain soggy. Container-grown plants should not be watered at all when leafless and dormant; resume watering when new shoots appear.

Fertilizer: Fertilize regularly during the growing season unless planted in fertile soil. If planting in the ground, amend it first with lots of compost, rotted manure, or other rich organic matter.

Bloom Period: Ginger is known to bloom during fall.

Flower Color: Ginger produces clusters of white and pink flower buds that bloom into yellow flowers.

Size: Allow plenty of room for the plant to grow to its mature size of 4 feet high by 3 feet wide.

Toxicity: Despite the advantages, ginger may cause adverse effects in some individuals, such as gastrointestinal discomfort, heartburn, and allergic reactions. As current studies clarify, the mechanisms and effects of ginger, the role of ginger in promoting overall well-being, and disease prevention are increasingly substantiated.

Pruning: Prune well in the spring before new growth appears. Remove dead or damaged canes at any time during the year and remove spent flowers.

Sources: https://plants.rogersgardens.com/12290002/Plant/27223/Common_Ginger/;
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ginger>; <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/ginger-zingiber-officinale/>;
<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/zingiber-officinale/>; <https://vcahospitals.com/know-your-pet/ginger>;
<https://www.thespruce.com/flowering-ginger-plants-1315760>

GOLDEN SHOWER TREE

(*Cassia fistula*)

Fabaceae



Geographical Origin: India, Malaysia, and Southeast Asia.

Overview: *Cassia fistula* is widely grown as an ornamental plant in tropical and subtropical areas. In Ayurvedic medicine, the golden shower tree is known as *aragvadha*, meaning "disease killer". The fruit pulp is considered a purgative, and self-medication or any use without medical supervision is strongly advised against in Ayurvedic texts.

General Characteristics and Care: In India, flowers of the golden shower tree are sometimes eaten by people. The leaves have also been used to supplement the diets of cattle, sheep, and goats fed with low-quality forages.

Zones: The *Cassia* is found in zones 10 through 11

Exposure: Golden shower should be grown in full sun.

Soil: This beauty tolerates clay; sand; loam; alkaline; acidic; and well-drained soils.

Water: This tree prefers a medium amount of water, meaning moist soil, and can tolerate drought.

Fertilizer: For this tree, a balanced 10-10-10 mix hits the sweet spot, fostering leaf growth, vibrant blooms, and overall health.

Bloom Period: It blooms in late spring/early summer in hot, dry weather. Flowering is profuse, with trees being covered with yellow flowers, many times with almost no visible leaves.

Flower Color: The golden shower tree produces bundles of very showy yellow flowers.

Size: Golden Shower is a fast-growing tree that reaches 30 to 40 feet in height and 30 to 40 feet wide.

Toxicity: The seeds contained within the tree's seedpods are poisonous.

Pruning: Trees will need occasional pruning when they are young to control shape and develop a uniform crown. Young trees can grow asymmetrical with branches often drooping toward the ground. Staking and proper pruning will help build a well-shaped and structured crown.

Sources: <https://floridaseeds.net/products/golden-shower-tree-cassia-fistula-bulk-100-seeds-free-us-shipping>; <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ST127>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassia_fistula; <https://pfaf.org/user/Plant.aspx?LatinName=Cassia+fistula>; <https://greg.app/golden-shower-tree-fertilizer/>;

GOLDEN TRUMPET TREE
(Handroanthus chrysotrichus)
Bignoniaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Brazil.

Overview: *Handroanthus chrysotrichus*, synonym *Tabebuia chrysotricha*, commonly known as the Golden Trumpet Tree, is a semi-evergreen/semi-deciduous (shedding foliage for a short period in late spring) tree. It is very similar to and often confused with *Tabebuia ochracea*.

General Characteristics and Care: An ideal patio specimen or lawn tree, the golden trumpet tree is often seen as a small, 25- to 35-foot-tall tree but can reach 50 feet, with a rounded, spreading canopy in a wind-protected area. Sometimes evergreen, but most often deciduous.

Zones: The USDA rates it for hardiness zones 9b through 11.

Exposure: A native of tropical America, the golden trumpet tree can be grown best in full sun.

Soil: The Golden Trumpet can tolerate clay; sand; loam; acidic; alkaline; and well-drained soils.

Water: Once they have been established, the trees are drought tolerant but should be provided with extra water during the warmest summer months. Drought tolerance is evident as is tolerance to salt spray.

Fertilizer: Regular fertilizing improves growth.

Bloom Period: The leaves drop for a short period in April to May, and it is at this time that the trees put on their heaviest flowering display, the trumpet-shaped, bright yellow blossoms appearing in dense 2.5- to 8-inch-long terminal clusters.

Flower Color: It has very showy golden-yellow to red flowers in the spring.

Size: *Handroanthus chrysotrichus* grows to a height of 15 to 25 ft, sometimes up to 50 ft, with a spread of 25 to 35 ft.

Toxicity: Its beauty masks the presence of alkaloids such as scopolamine and atropine, which can disrupt the nervous system if ingested by humans or pets.

Pruning: This tree requires little to no pruning.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Handroanthus_chrysotrichus;
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ST614>; <https://apps.cals.arizona.edu/arboretum/taxon.aspx?id=429>;
<https://www.treeworldwholesale.com/product/tabebuia-chrysotricha-golden-trumpet/>; <https://greg.app/golden-trumpet-tree-toxic-to-humans/#:~:text=The%20Golden%20Trumpet%20Tree%2C%20also,the%20nervous%20system%20if%20ingested>

GOMPHRENA
(*Gomphrena* spp.)
Amaranthaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Guatemala, Panama, and Brazil and is cultivated around the world.

Overview: *Gomphrena* is a genus of long-blooming perennial plants that grow in tropical and subtropical regions around the world. Also known as Globe Amaranth, they are found anywhere from open woodlands, to deserts, to sandy slopes, to dry stream beds. Certain species are considered weeds in some places. All species of *Gomphrena* are highly attractive to pollinators including bees and butterflies. In the United States, gomphrena is more often cultivated as a garden ornamental, cut flower, or as an everlasting in dried floral arrangements.

General Characteristics and Care: These are low-maintenance plants with papery, clover-like blooms of many colors that retain their vibrancy when dried. This is a well-behaved plant with a bushy habit ideal for filling bare spots in the garden with mid- to late-season color. Blooms appear in clumps on one to two foot tall stems with long, narrow, edible leaves.

Zones: USDA 9-11. *Gomphrena* grows best in 65° to 75°F. They do not tolerate frost.

Exposure: Full sun.

Soil: Sandy, loamy, well-drained soil; Acid to neutral pH.

Water: Drought-tolerant once established. Avoid wetting the foliage, and water at ground level when the top inch of soil feels dry.

Fertilizer: You might choose to fertilize gomphrena once or twice during the growing season, but the plants do not require extra feeding and don't have a preference for fertilizer type.

Bloom Period: Summer, fall.

Flower Color: Pink, purple, white, red, orange; Colors can be intense.

Size: 6-24 in. tall, 6-12 in. wide.

Toxicity: *Gomphrena globose* is not considered toxic to people or pets. In fact, it's often referred to as an edible plant with antioxidant properties.

Pruning: Globe Amaranth does not need pinching or deadheading to put on a continuous show of blooms. However, if you want to encourage bushier growth, especially when growing taller varieties, you can pinch back plants by about half early in the growing season, cutting the stems just above a set of leaves.

Sources: <https://www.thespruce.com/gomphrena-care-guide-7555301>.;
<https://almanacplanting.com/pages/atomic-purple-globe-amaranth>.;

HAWAIIAN TI
(*Cordyline fruticosa*)
Asparagaceae



Geographical Origin: They are native to Southeast Asia, Eastern Australia, and some Pacific islands.

Overview: “*Cordyline*” comes from the Greek word *kordyle*, which means “club”. This refers to the plant’s enlarged underground stems or rhizomes. Some species in this group have fragrant flowers followed by berries. *Cordyline* grows best as a perennial plant in warmer climates and an annual plant in cooler climates.

General Characteristics and Care: *Cordyline*, also known as Ti, has tough, spiky leaves in colors like green, red, yellow, white, purple, and purplish red. They’re not only popular for their vibrant foliage but also have a rich cultural significance. In places like Hawaii, for instance, they are believed to possess protective qualities and are often cultivated around homes and in gardens as symbols of good luck.

Zones: USDA 9-11.

Exposure: Likes partial sun to prevent leaf burn. In shade, leaves will lose their red color.

Soil: A *Cordyline* plant requires well-draining, fertile soil with a pH between 6.0 and 6.5.

Water: Once established, *Cordylines* growing in the ground are drought-tolerant, though new plants will require consistent hydration during dry spells in their initial growth phase.

Fertilizer: To support their development, apply a general slow-release fertilizer each spring or during early summer.

Bloom Period: Although rarely seen flowering, fully-grown *Cordylines* will produce spikes of small, charming flowers in the warm summer months.

Flower Color: Flowers come in white, pink, and lavender.

Size: This variety of *Cordyline* can grow 10-15 feet tall.

Toxicity: *Cordyline* is toxic to pets. They contain *saponins*, which can cause stomach problems if ingested by animals. The sap and leaves of this plant can also cause skin irritation if touched by sensitive individuals.

Pruning: If the plant looks leggy or loses its lower leaves, prune it. Remove dead leaves and trim the top to encourage bushier growth.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=cordyline+fruticosa;>

[https://www.planetnatural.com/cordyline/;](https://www.planetnatural.com/cordyline/)[https://www.thespruce.com/grow-cordyline-indoors-1902747.;](https://www.thespruce.com/grow-cordyline-indoors-1902747;)

HELENIUM (Bitter Sneezeweed)
(Helenium amarum)
Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the Southeastern United States.

Overview: Also known as Yellow Sneezeweed, Bitterweed, Yellow Bitterweed, Yellowdicks, Slender-leaved Sneezeweed, Fine-leaved Sneezeweed, Yellow Dog-fennel. *Helenium amarum* has stems covered with almost-threadlike leaves. The genus is thought to have been named by Linnaeus for Helen of Troy. The legend is that the flowers sprung up from the ground where her tears fell. Butterflies are attracted to this plant.

General Characteristics and Care: This plant will easily self-seed in the landscape. This genus is primarily found growing in sandy soils in the southeastern to southcentral U.S. from Virginia to Florida west to Missouri, Kansas and Texas. However, it has spread over time and naturalized in many of the eastern, central and Great Plains states plus California. The common name of sneezeweed is reportedly in reference to a former snuff-like use of the dried and powdered flowers of this plant by members of some Native American tribes for treatment of blocked sinuses.

Zones: USDA Zones 3-10.

Exposure: Full sun to part shade.

Soil: Helenium needs well-drained, slightly acidic soil (pH between 5.5 and 7.0).

Water: Helenium needs moderate moisture, which makes sense because its native setting tends to be low-lying meadows or the edges of damp woodlands.

Fertilizer: Feed plant every few weeks with a high Nitrogen fertilizer.

Bloom Period: August through October. Will bloom earlier in milder climates.

Flower Color: Bright yellow.

Size: Grows 1-2 feet tall and up to one foot wide.

Toxicity: The plant is somewhat toxic to mammals and insects due to the presence of the lactone tenulin.

Pruning: Responds well to a quick trim in spring for promoting even more branching and flowers. Divide every few years in spring or after bloom in fall to keep vigorous.

Sources: [https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=HEAM.;](https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=HEAM.)
<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/help-for-the-home-gardener/sustainable-gardening.;> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helenium_amarum.;

HELICONIA
(Heliconia spp.)
Heliconiaceae



Geographical Origin: Most of the 194 known species are native to the tropical Americas, but a few are indigenous to certain islands of the western Pacific and Maluku in Indonesia.

Overview: While most heliconias are tropical and confined to growing in South Florida, there are a few species from the subtropical and temperate zones that will grow throughout the Sunshine State. Common names for the genus include Lobster-Claws, Toucan Beak, Wild Plantain, or False Bird-of-Paradise; the last term refers to their close similarity to the bird-of-paradise flowers in the *Strelitzia* genus. Collectively, these plants are also simply referred to as "heliconias".

Heliconia originated in the Late Eocene (39 Ma) and are the oldest known clade of hummingbird-pollinated plants.¹

General Characteristics and Care:

In the landscape, some varieties tightly clump, while others “run” and can be mildly invasive. All the larger varieties require ample space to look their best. Heliconias don’t want to be exposed to the wind. Each stalk will only bear a flowerhead once (true flowers are in the wax-like bracts).

Zones: Zones 8-10.

Exposure: Depending on the species, heliconias prefer partial shade or direct sunlight. Avoid planting them in areas that are mostly shaded.

Soil: Use well-draining soil that is rich in organic matter. Mulch regularly with peat moss to maintain moisture. The desirable pH for heliconias is around 6 to 6.5.

Water: Water regularly to maintain moist soil.

Fertilizer: Use high-quality slow-release organic palm fertilizer along with copious amounts of organic compost. Heliconias are relatively shallow-rooted — requiring only about 6 inches of soil depth.

Bloom Period: With the right light levels, it will produce exotic red and yellow blooms reliably from spring to autumn.

Flower Color: The flowers can be hues of reds, oranges, yellows, and greens, and are subtended by brightly colored bracts.

Size: Heliconias come in a range of styles and sizes. While most grow to around 3-4 feet.

Toxicity: A few species are considered toxic to humans and animals, but most are not.

Pruning: Cut to the ground after blooms fade. Left on the plant, the bloom can last many months. If cut for display, the bloom on some varieties may last up to two weeks.

Sources: <https://www.thefloridagardeningproject.com/try-a-heliconia-or-two.;>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heliconia.;>

HERALD'S TRUMPET VINE (Nepal Trumpet Flower)
(Beaumontia grandiflora)
Apocynaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the eastern Indian Subcontinent, southern China, and mainland Southeast Asia, and has been introduced to a number of locales in Central America.

Overview: They are mostly evergreen, though in subtropical gardens *Beaumontia grandiflora* loses many leaves in winter. Leaves are large, smooth and opposite with sticky white sap from petiolar glands. They are very showy when in full bloom and are regarded as among the most outstanding vines of the world.

General Characteristics and Care: With its vining habit and trumpet-shaped flowers it is widely cultivated as an ornamental. Apparently, the young twigs can be used to make fiber and the young branches for a coarser rope. The seed-pod hairs, meanwhile, are said to be not only the most lustrous and most purely white of all the so-called 'vegetable silks', but also possess a remarkable degree of strength. In the wild, *Beaumontia* climbs impressively through trees and over rocks and shrubs.

Zones: USDA Zones 9-11.

Exposure: Full to partial sun.

Soil: They prefer good soil, adequate water and hot moist conditions.

Water: Herald's Trumpet thrives in moderately water-rich environments, tolerating brief droughts. For optimal growth, water bi-weekly, ensuring proper drainage.

Fertilizer: For optimal growth, Herald's Trumpet requires bi-monthly balanced fertilization during the growing season. Use equal NPK ratios and reduce feeding frequency during dormancy.

Bloom Period: Late spring to early fall.

Flower Color: Has terminal clusters of large (3-6 inch long by 4 inches wide) fragrant white flowers that are trumpet-shaped and resemble an Easter Lily.

Size: *Beaumontia grandiflora* is a vigorous evergreen climber that can reach to 30 feet tall or more and as wide if a strong support is available.

Toxicity: Eating the flowers and leaves can be poisonous. It may cause symptoms like nausea, hallucinations, and blurred vision.

Pruning: Prune in early spring to remove dead stems and thin dense areas, enhancing air circulation, sunlight penetration, and flower production.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beaumontia_grandiflora.;
[https://sandrasgardenblog.wordpress.com/2020/02/19/plant-stories-beaumontia-grandiflora/;](https://sandrasgardenblog.wordpress.com/2020/02/19/plant-stories-beaumontia-grandiflora/)
https://www.picturethisai.com/wiki/Beaumontia_grandiflora.html.;

HIBISCUS
(*Hibiscus* spp.)
Malvaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to warm temperate, subtropical and tropical regions throughout the world.

Overview: The genus is quite large, comprising several hundred species. A tea made from the flowers of *Hibiscus sabdariffa* is known by many names around the world and is served both hot and cold. The beverage is known for its red color, tart flavor, and vitamin C content. In traditional medicine, people use hibiscus preparations to treat ailments such as liver problems and high blood pressure.

General Characteristics and Care: In tropical and subtropical areas, the Chinese hibiscus (*H. rosa-sinensis*), with its many showy hybrids, is the most popular hibiscus. Many species are grown for their showy flowers or used as landscape shrubs, and are used to attract butterflies, bees, and hummingbirds. Hibiscus is a very hardy, versatile plant. Being versatile it adapts itself easily to balcony gardens in cramped urban spaces and can be easily grown in pots as a creeper or even in hanging pots. It is a perennial and flowers throughout the year. As it comes in a variety of colors, it's a plant that can add vibrancy to any garden.

Zones: Perennial hibiscus plants can survive the winter in zones 4 to 9 but are a tropical plant.

Exposure: Hibiscus does best in full sun in warm, humid environments.

Soil: Hibiscus thrives best in well-drained soil, amended with organic matter. Hibiscus prefers acidic soil. Hibiscus can grow well in pH between 5.0 and 7.5, but likes it best when the pH is between 5.5 and 7.0.

Water: Water plants thoroughly at the time of planting and throughout the growing season.

Fertilizer: Apply an extended-release fertilizer once in late spring when new growth emerges.

Bloom Period: Under the right conditions, it will bloom all year long. It blooms on new growth.

Flower Color: This plant flowers in a multitude of colors, and new varieties are constantly being developed.

Size: These plants can vary greatly in size, depending on the species: from 3-10 ft. tall, and 2-8 ft. wide.

Toxicity: In most cases, hibiscus is non-toxic for pets, but the Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*) can be harmful to dogs.

Pruning: Hibiscus can be severely cut back to combat legginess or to rejuvenate the plant; but doing so will inhibit blooms until the plant can put out substantial new growth.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=hibiscus.;>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hibiscus.;> <https://miracleagro.com/en-us/learn-grow/how-to-grow-hibiscus.html.;>

HOLLY (Yaupon 'Dwarf')

(*Ilex vomitoria* 'Nana')

Aquifoliaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the eastern United States and Mexico.

Overview: Yaupon Holly is native to a variety of areas including sandy woods, dunes, open fields, forest edges and wet swamps, often along the coastal plain and maritime forests. Native Americans used the leaves to make a ceremonial emetic drink ("Black Drink") which, when consumed in large quantities, caused a cleansing now memorialized by the specific epithet (*vomitoria*).

General Characteristics and Care: Dwarf Yaupon Holly is a mounding broadleaved evergreen plant with shiny dark green leaves. New growth appears on smokey purple stems in spring. Favorite cultivars are 'Nana,' and 'Schillings' ('Stokes Dwarf'). Once established, plants are drought and heat tolerant and have good resistance to insects and diseases.

Zones: 7-9.

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.

Soil: The plant prefers well-drained soil. Dwarf Yaupon Holly also tolerates a wide range of soil pH, performing best in acid to slightly alkaline soil ranging between 5.5 to 7.5.

Water: Water the root ball twice or three times a week during the plant's first year and then weekly.

Fertilizer: Fertilize Dwarf Yaupon Hollies with a slow-release shrub and tree type fertilizer that contains iron and/or sulfur for deep greening.

Bloom Period: Small greenish-white flowers in spring; they are fragrant but generally inconspicuous. Pollinated flowers on female plants give way to berry-like red fruits (1/4" diameter) which ripen in fall and persist into winter.

Flower Color: White.

Size: Height: 2-4 Feet (Mounded Shrub), Width: 4-5 Feet.

Toxicity: Although not considered very poisonous, the attractive red or black berries should be considered dangerous to small children and animals. Symptoms listed are "nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stupor due to depression of the central nervous system.

Pruning: Pruning is necessary to maintain its mounded shape; if left unpruned, a Dwarf Yaupon Holly shrub will keep growing. Although it's called "dwarf", most varieties of small Yaupon Holly are simply slow growing.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=yaupon+holly;>

[https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/plant-library/yaupon-holly-dwarf/;](https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/plant-library/yaupon-holly-dwarf/)

[https://www.wilsonbrosgardens.com/planting-and-caring-for-dwarf-yaupon-hollies.html.](https://www.wilsonbrosgardens.com/planting-and-caring-for-dwarf-yaupon-hollies.html)

HORSETAIL REED

(*Equisetum arvense*)

Equisetaceae



Geographical Origin: The genus *Equisetum* as a whole, while concentrated in the non-tropical northern hemisphere, is near cosmopolitan, being absent only from Antarctica, though they are not known to be native to Australia, New Zealand nor the islands of the Pacific. They are most common in northern North America.

Overview: The name "horsetail", often used for the entire plant group, arose because the branched species somewhat resemble a horse's tail. Similarly, the scientific name *Equisetum* is derived from the Latin *equus* ('horse') + *seta* ('bristle'). Other names include Candock for branching species, and Snake Grass or Scouring Rush for unbranched or sparsely branched species. The latter name refers to the rush-like appearance of the plants and to the fact that the stems are coated with abrasive silicates, making them useful for scouring (cleaning) metal items such as cooking pots or drinking mugs, particularly those made of tin. In Spanish-speaking countries, these plants are known as *cola de caballo* ('horsetail').

General Characteristics and Care: *Equisetum* leaves are greatly reduced and usually non-photosynthetic. The leaves of horsetails are arranged in whorls fused into nodal sheaths. The stems are usually green and photosynthetic, and are distinctive in being hollow, jointed and ridged with sometimes 3 but usually 6–40 ridges.

Zones: USDA 4–9.

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.

Soil: Moist but well-drained; Neutral to acidic pH.

Water: Likes wet conditions and even in standing water, such as water gardens or swampy areas.

Fertilizer: In general, horsetails do not like particularly rich or fertile soil, so fertilizing is not necessary.

Bloom Period: Horsetail does not produce flowers or seeds.

Flower Color: N/A

Size: Horsetail will grow 2-5 feet tall.

Toxicity: *E. arvense* contains thiaminase, which metabolizes the B vitamin, thiamine, potentially causing thiamine deficiency and associated liver damage, if taken chronically. Toxic to grazing animals.

Pruning: Horsetail has aggressively spreading, underground rhizomes, and it can become highly invasive. Needs to be constantly removed from unwanted areas.

Sources: <https://www.thespruce.com/horsetail-plant-aggressively-spreading-weed-4125786>.; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equisetum>.;

HOSTA (Sun)
(Hosta spp. 'Sun')
Asperagaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to northeast Asia (China, Japan, Korea, and the Russian Far East).

Overview: Despite being called full-sun Hostas, though, these plants aren't like coneflower or daisies that can take eight hours of intense sun. Rather, Hostas that withstand sun are referred to as sun-tolerant Hostas. These versatile plants are widely useful when massed in a border or along a slope, as a foundation planting or stand-alone accent, in containers, or when combined with other woodland plants.

General Characteristics and Care: Hostas with green, chartreuse or golden leaves will tolerate more sun, provided moisture is adequate. These Hostas can be planted in full sun because they are less prone to leaf scorch. Sun Hostas will best express their white variegation in full sun. Sun Hosta has very low cold requirements compared to other Hosta varieties. It will stay vegetative under short days during winter months in South Florida. In other areas with occasional freezes plants will go dormant during winter months and reemerge bigger in early April.

Zones: Winter hardy in USDA Zones 3 to 9.

Exposure: Full sun but not for prolonged periods.

Soil: Hostas will grow best in rich organic soil. The recommended soil is well drained and has a slightly acidic pH.

Water: A very strong drought tolerance makes this plant attractive for landscapers.

Fertilizer: Established Hostas grow best with a slow release 10-10-10 fertilizer applied in the spring.

Bloom Period: Summer.

Flower Color: The flowers of Hosta are produced on upright scapes (stalks) that are woody and remain on the plant throughout winter, they are generally taller than the leaf mound, and end in terminal racemes. The flower color of the Sun Hosta is white or lavender.

Size: The 22" tall x 3' wide clump is topped with sturdy 3' tall scapes of flowers.

Toxicity: Hosta plants contain saponins, natural compounds that can disrupt cell membranes. This isn't typically a crisis for adults, but for children, the effects can be more pronounced.

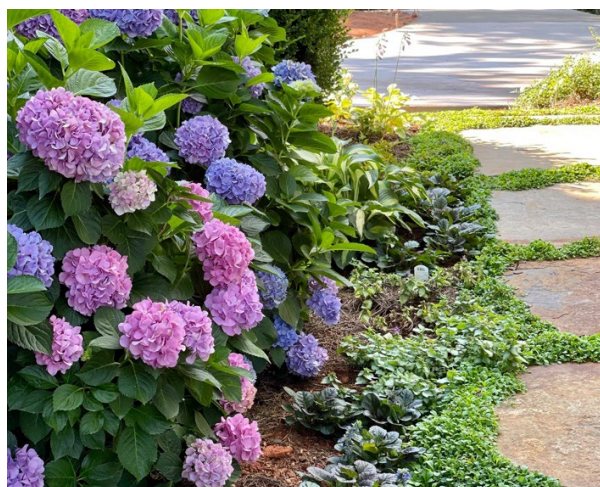
Pruning: Wait to prune back Hostas until the leaves turn completely yellow or fully brown. The flower stalks (scapes) should be removed once the flowers are spent.

Sources: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hosta.>; [http://www.sunhosta.com/.](http://www.sunhosta.com/);
<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Sun+Hosta+blooming+period.>;
<https://www.plantdelights.com/products/hosta-sun-flower?srsItd=AfmBOooP1g7bHhhIvLyiOtsXqNDMMHG7Re0QIUwuAS483P2qjSdbibz.>;
<https://www.provenwinners.com/learn/hosta>.

HYDRANGEA 'Endless Summer'

(*Hydrangea macrophylla*)

Hydrangeaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Asia and the Americas.

Overview: Hydrangea, commonly named the Hortensia, is a genus of more than 70 species of flowering plants. By far the greatest species diversity is in eastern Asia, notably China, Korea, and Japan. The earlier name, *Hortensia*, is a Latinized version of the French given name Hortense, honoring French astronomer and mathematician Nicole-Reine Hortense Lepaute.

General Characteristics and Care: Hydrangeas are an easy-to-care-for shrub that will thrive when its light, sun, soil, water, temperature, and fertilizer needs are met. Certain species bloom on old wood, so their blooms develop on stems produced during the previous growing season. For cut flowers, cut them when the flower head is open, and the color is developed. Cut the stems well below the flowers and remove the lower leaves, place the stems in a vase with water.

Zones: Hydrangeas are generally hardy in USDA zones 3-9, although their specific cold and heat tolerance can vary depending on the species.

Exposure: Most common hydrangeas prefer a partial sun location--ideally receiving sun in the morning hours and shade in the afternoon.

Soil: The flowers of many Hydrangeas act as *natural pH indicators*, sporting blue flowers when the soil is acidic and pink ones when the soil is alkaline.

Water: It is better to thoroughly soak your Hydrangeas every 2-3 days as opposed to a light daily shower, which may not seep far enough down to impact the roots.

Fertilizer: MiracleGro, the most widely used liquid product on the market, has an N-P-K ratio of 15-30-15. This high phosphorous level is not ideal for a sustained 'blue' hydrangea fertilization program but for spot use, the nutrient charge can be immediate and beneficial for 'restarting' stressed plants

Bloom Period: Hydrangea flowers are produced from early spring to late autumn.

Flower Color: They can be white, pink, blue, red, or purple, depending on soil pH.

Size: Most are shrubs 1-3m (3ft 3in- 9ft 10in) tall, but some are small trees, and others lianas reaching up to 30m (100ft) by climbing up trees.

Toxicity: All parts of the plant are *poisonous*. If eaten, symptoms can include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Skin contact can cause dermatitis, rash or irritation.

Pruning: A pruning and deadheading routine keeps Hydrangea flowering all season long.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=hydrangea.;>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hydrangea.;> <https://www.marthastewart.com/1130088/hydrangea-care-things-you-should-know.;>

ICE PLANT ‘Hottentot’
(*Carpobrotus* Spp.)
Aizoaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the coast of South Africa, where the climate is similar to that of coastal California. Ice Plant was introduced to California in the early 1900s as an erosion stabilization tool used on railroad tracks, and later used by Caltrans on roadsides.

Overview: Ice Plant is a common name for many genera and species but two of the most popular genera known for their brightly colored flowers are the perennials *Lampranthus* and *Delosperma*. The name *Ice Plant* derives from tiny hairs on the plant's leaves and stems that reflect light in a way that resembles ice crystals. The foliage is fleshy and succulent-like, morphing into a darker color as fall temperatures drop. Ironically, Ice Plants are cold-sensitive, but many types are evergreen in warm, dry regions. Ice Plants are most reliably perennial in the drier, less humid climates of the western US. *Delosperma* tend to be annuals in cold, wet zone 4 and 5 climates, but will be longer lived in the zone 6-8 areas of the Eastern Seaboard. Remember that many drought-tolerant plants are one or two zones less cold hardy in wetter climates.

General Characteristics and Care: Ice Plant is considered invasive, especially in parts of coastal California where it is widespread. It can form a large, thick mat that chokes out other native plants and changes the soil's environment, as well.

Zones: They prefer the warmth of Zone 10 but will grow in colder zones as annuals.

Exposure: Likes full sun.

Soil: It likes Well-drained soil with a neutral pH (7.0). Sandy and gravelly soils are ideal for this plant. The soil does not need to be rich in nutrients.

Water: Water every two weeks.

Fertilizer: It can be helpful to add compost, or a slow-release fertilizer made for flowers, when planting. Ice Plants can also do well with no feeding whatsoever.

Bloom Period: Spring, summer, fall.

Flower Color: Pink, red, purple, yellow, orange.

Size: 3–6 in. tall, 12–24 in. wide.

Toxicity: These plants are non-toxic to people and pets.

Pruning: Prune out any winter-killed stems every spring.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=iceplant#vhid=HiBvpEy4-wHHPM&vssid=1>; <https://www.thespruce.com/purple-ice-plant-2132553>; <https://plantaddicts.com/is-ice-plant-poisonous/>. <https://www.highcountrygardens.com/content/gardening/growing-ice-plant-delosperma>

IMPATIENS (Various)

(*Impatiens* spp.)

Balsaminaceae



Geographical Origin: *Impatiens* is a genus of more than 1,000 species of flowering plants, widely distributed throughout the Northern Hemisphere and the tropics.

Overview: *Impatiens* (*Impatiens walleriana*) are one of the most popular bedding plants in the United States. Most *Impatiens* species are perennial herbs. However, several annual species exist, especially in the temperate regions. A few *Impatiens* species in southeast Asia (e.g. *Impatiens kerriae* or *Impatiens mirabilis*) form shrubs or small trees up to three feet tall.

General Characteristics and Care: Older varieties of *impatiens* such as Accent, Tempo, and Super Elfin series, are occasionally found in garden centers but these varieties are very prone to downy mildew diseases. Newly introduced varieties are resistant to this disease. Some of these cultivars are crosses between *I. walleriana* and the downy mildew-resistant New Guinea *impatiens*. Plants in these series are compact, free flowering, and available in a wide range of colors.

Zones: Most *Impatiens* varieties are suitable for USDA hardiness zones 10 and 11, where they can be grown as perennials.

Exposure: Sites that receive 2 to 4 hours of filtered sun during the day or morning sun and afternoon shade are usually ideal. *Impatiens* can also be grown in heavy shade. However, plants will be taller and bloom less profusely in heavily shaded locations.

Soil: *Impatiens* should be planted in humus-rich, moist, well-draining soil with a slightly acidic pH of 6-6.5.

Water: *Impatiens* actually have moderate water needs.

Fertilizer: A balanced all-purpose fertilizer with a 13-13-13 or 10-10-10 ratio is recommended.

Bloom Period: Late spring until the first frost.

Flower Color: They have bright and prolific blooms of white, peach, apricot, pink, and red.

Size: Compact *Impatiens* grow 10 to 16 inches tall and approximately 10 to 15 inches wide. Newer varieties of *Impatiens* grow to heights reaching up to 36 inches.

Toxicity: All *Impatiens* seem to be slightly toxic upon ingestion, causing intestinal ailments like vomiting and diarrhea.

Pruning: *Impatiens* should be pruned when they grow to about 6 inches high to help avoid the plants becoming leggy.

Sources: [https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=impatiens#vhid=wArXntmIKsXl9M&vssid=1](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=impatiens#vhid=wArXntmIKsXl9M&vssid=1;); <https://yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu>.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impatiens>;

IRIS 'Apostle Walking'
(Iris Neomarica caerulea 'Regina')
Iridaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Brazil.

Overview: This plant gets perhaps its most common name, “Walking iris” from its propagation habit. New plantlets form at the tops of flower stalks which then bend to the ground and take root. Eventually, the new plant will repeat the same process. In this way many Walking Iris plants “walk” through the landscape.

General Characteristics and Care: Heat, cold, drought tolerant, with tough erect structure. 'Regina' is a wide-leaved iris that has 3-4 inch wide purple-blue flowers accented by strikingly brilliant jade foliage, which assumes a more clumping and upright habit than the more common walking iris. Although it is considered a Walking Iris, it walks only under extreme stress. Sudden changes in plant health related to nutrient levels in the soil may also occur. This will usually manifest in chlorosis, making yellow walking iris foliage a cause for concern.

Zones: USDA 8-11.

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.

Soil: Walking Iris will flourish across a wide range of soils, preferring those that are neutral or slightly acidic.

Water: Needs moderate watering.

Fertilizer: Balanced NPK ratio and organic options promote long-term health and blooms. Avoid over-fertilization; watch for yellow leaves, crusty soil, and adjust as needed.

Bloom Period: It's a repeat bloomer, producing flushes of flowers in succession, many on the same stalks from February through August.

Flower Color: The purple blooms of the iris are rippled with glowing white, splashes of mauve and yellow offering refreshing color and texture.

Size: Grows to 3' to 4' tall. Spread: 12-18 inches.

Toxicity: Scientific literature does not classify the Walking Iris as a toxic plant to humans.

Pruning: Follow the stem down to the base, where it meets the rhizome. Make an angled cut with sharp, sterilized pruning shears.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Iris+Aposyle+Walking.;>
https://www.agristarts.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/plants.plantDetail/plant_ID/166/index.htm.;
<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/walking-iris/;>
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/bulbs/walking-iris/walking-iris-plants.htm.>

IRIS 'Blue Flag'
(Iris virginica 'Blue Flag')
Iridaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the United States and Canada, from the east coast to the middle states as far west as Texas.

Overview: The name "Iris" means 'rainbow' in Greek, which is fitting for a flower that comes in so many colors. Irises were said to represent the messenger of the gods in Greek Mythology, Iris. To the Greeks, she was known to be a rainbow, a link between heaven and earth.

General Characteristics and Care: The Cherokee use this medicinal plant for traditional medicinal uses. The root is pounded into a paste that is used as a salve for the skin. An infusion made from the root is used to treat ailments of the liver, and a decoction of the root is used to treat "yellowish urine." Virginia Iris may have been one of the Iris species used by the Seminole to treat "shock following alligator-bite." It grows in wet areas, sometimes in shallow water, including marshes, wet meadows, swamps, river bottoms, sloughs, ditches, bottomland prairies, edges of sinkhole ponds, and in shallow water.

Zones: Hardy in zones 5-9. Can tolerate marsh conditions as well as moist soil.

Exposure: Iris prefers full sun to part shade and will not bloom well if it has more shade than sun.

Soil: Will grow in poor soils but likes them acid rich.

Water: Likes standing water but will grow in moist soil.

Fertilizer: Because phosphate is important for blooming, we recommend bone meal or super-phosphate and a light balanced fertilizer such as 10-10-10 or 6-10-10.

Bloom Period: Bloom time is from late spring to early summer.

Flower Color: The bloom color is somewhat variable but is most often a medium to pale blue violet. There is a yellow blotch on the lower sepal where it joins a small upper lip.

Size: It is 2'-3' high with the leaves on the flower stem growing slightly taller than the flower.

Toxicity: The roots of Virginia Iris are toxic when taken internally, without sufficient preparation.

Pruning: Once the blooms have finished, it's time to remove them. Get down to the base, where the stalk meets the rhizome, and cut at an angle. This isn't just about looks—it's about redirecting your plant's energy to the parts that matter.

Sources: [https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Iris+Blue+Flag#vhid=bQp5eCoYTXpyEM&vssid=l](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Iris+Blue+Flag#vhid=bQp5eCoYTXpyEM&vssid=l;).; <https://www.izelplants.com/iris-virginica-blue-flag-iris/>.; <https://www.fnps.org/plant/iris-virginica>.

IXORA (Petite)

(*Ixora coccinea*)

Rubiaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to India, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia.

Overview: Dwarf Ixora and Maui Ixora are the smaller varieties of this lushly flowering shrub. They have gorgeous flowers most of the year, easy care, and compact size. Often planted in groups or rows for maximum color, ixoras work well with informal gardens, tropical beds, or more formal and manicured landscape designs. *Ixora* is Latinized from *Ishwara*, a Sanskrit word meaning God, and the genus was formally created by Linnaeus in 1753. In tropical climates, they flower year-round and are commonly used in Hindu worship, as well as in ayurveda and Indian folk medicine.

General Characteristics and Care: Clustered blooms attract butterflies and come in a variety of colors, with the texture and shape of a fat, coconut-covered cookie. The dwarf variety has small leaves like boxwood and blossoms cover almost the entire plant. Ixoras are said to be deer-resistant, though no plant is really deer-proof.

Zones: They thrive in Zone 10, though extra-cold winters can cause them to drop leaves.

Exposure: Partial shade to full sun.

Soil: Ixora not well-suited to alkaline conditions, particularly areas next to sidewalks or foundations, and new growth will appear chlorotic from iron and manganese deficiencies. Purplish-red spots on older leaves indicate a combined potassium/phosphorus deficiency.

Water: Water on a regular basis, but don't keep the area overly wet.

Fertilizer: Fertilize in spring, summer and fall with a quality granular fertilizer.

Bloom Period: One of the best things about ixora is that it flowers throughout the year. Each flower cluster can last between 6 and 8 weeks.

Flower Color: Ixora comes in bright red, orange, yellow, pink, and white.

Size: This shrub is a moderate grower and can be kept about 2-1/2 to 3 feet tall. The dwarf grows more slowly and can be kept 2 feet or less.

Toxicity: Non-toxic to humans and pets. Skin contact may irritate.

Pruning: Trim to shape as needed. Avoid pruning the dwarf shrub too hard, since it will take a long time to grow out of the pruning. Maui can be cut back in spring (late March or early April) to promote fuller, bushier plants.

Sources: <https://www.south-florida-plant-guide.com/dwarf-ixora.html>.;
<https://jungleplants.com/products/dwarf-ixora?srltid=AfmBOoovJV-dml-kIroM4guH6sTgl8qS2D9nn8aXjOegoTnzsOinauYn>.;
<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/ixora/>.;

KALANCHOE ‘Red Lips’

(*Kalanchoe thyrsiflora*)

Crassulaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to South Africa.

Overview: This plant is rare in cultivation, and those plants labelled as "*Kalanchoe thyrsiflora*" in horticulture are mostly another similar species, *Kalanchoe luciae*. *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora*, sometimes called paddle plant, flapjacks, dog tongue, or desert cabbage, is a succulent plant known for its flat, rounded leaves. This drought-tolerant plant grows a thin coating of white powder called farina, or epicuticular wax, to protect its leaves. Many are grown for their flowers, but “flapjacks“ (sometimes used as a common name, other times indicated as a cultivar) is prized for its foliage.

General Characteristics and Care: This plant is a succulent so is accustomed to living in hot, arid areas with poor soils. *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* stores moisture in its thick, succulent leaves, so it's quite drought tolerant. A mature, healthy *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* will grow small, immature plants around its base. You can remove these to propagate into new plants. You'll need small plant pots, succulent soil, and clean shears or pruners.

Zones: 10-12 (USDA) (colder zones only when potted and indoors).

Exposure: Full, Partial sun.

Soil: Sandy, Well-drained; Acidic.

Water: Water when the soil has completely dried out.

Fertilizer: Feed *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* with a balanced liquid houseplant fertilizer diluted to half strength once per month starting in late winter or early spring. Continue through summer, then stop fertilizing during fall and winter.

Bloom Period: Flowers are produced for an extended period from the end of the summer growing season into mid-winter (from February to June).

Flower Color: A striking addition to a succulent rockery or grassland garden, this plant stands tall with its striking white leaves and yellow flowers, at a time of the year when all the other plants are drying out for the harsh, dry winter months which lie ahead.

Size: 12-18 in. tall, 6-8 in. wide; 3-6 ft. tall when blooming.

Toxicity: *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* is toxic to people when ingested and pets.

Pruning: *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* doesn't require regular pruning. Before it blooms, the plant will grow taller and appear etiolated (lost vigor), but it's just preparing to bloom. Leave this growth intact to enjoy the flowers.

Sources: <https://www.thespruce.com/kalanchoe-thyrsiflora-care-guide-7501403>.;

[https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Kalanchoe+thyrsiflora#vhid=wgmcgDZF-](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Kalanchoe+thyrsiflora#vhid=wgmcgDZF-RqQ1M&vssid=1)

[RqQ1M&vssid=1](https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/flapjacks-kalanchoe-spp/); <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/flapjacks-kalanchoe-spp/>.;

LANTANA
(*Lantana camara*)
Verbenaceae



Geographical Origin: They are native to tropical regions of the Americas and Africa but exist as an introduced species in numerous areas, especially in the Australian-Pacific region, South and Northeastern part of India and Bangladesh.

Overview: Lantana is a perennial vining, flowering shrub in warm zones and an annual in places with frosty winters. Fast-growing Lantana produces rounded clusters of small, brightly colored flowers. Lantana's aromatic flower clusters (called umbels) are a mix of red, orange, yellow, or blue and white florets. Other colors exist as new varieties are being selected. The flowers typically change color as they mature, resulting in inflorescences that are two- or three-colored.

General Characteristics and Care: Some species are invasive, and are considered noxious weeds, such as in South Asia, Southern Africa and Australia. In the United States, Lantanas are invasive in the southeast, especially coastal regions of the Carolinas, Georgia, Florida, and the Gulf Coast. The spread of Lantana is aided by the fact that their leaves are poisonous to most animals and thus avoided by herbivores, while their fruit is a delicacy for many birds.

Zones: USDA 7-11.

Exposure: Needs full sun to bloom well.

Soil: Prefers well-draining soil that is neutral, slightly acidic, or slightly alkaline.

Water: Needs moist soil and likes humidity.

Fertilizer: Give balanced fertilizer only once a year, once monthly if growing in containers.

Bloom Period: Spring, summer, fall, winter.

Flower Color: Flowers come in yellow, orange, white, red, pink, blue, or purple.

Size: 6 ft. high, 6 ft. wide.

Toxicity: Lantana is toxic to pets. *Lantana* species, especially *L. camara*, contain pentacyclic triterpenoids that cause hepatotoxicity and photosensitivity when ingested by grazing animals such as sheep, goats, bovines, and horses. This has led to widespread livestock loss in the United States, South Africa, India, Mexico, and Australia.

Pruning: Prune perennial Lantanas back hard in spring (March) to remove old growth and prevent woodiness. Cut back to about 6 to 12 inches from ground level. Avoid hard pruning in fall as this can cause reduced cold hardiness.

Sources: <https://www.thespruce.com/add-a-florida-touch-with-Lantana-plants-2132142>;

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lantana>.; <https://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheet/Lantana/>;

LIVE OAK
(Quercus virginiana)
Fagaceae



Geographical Origin: Its native range begins in southeast Virginia, and then continues south in a narrow band through North Carolina along the coast to the interior South Carolina coast, where its range begins to expand farther inland.

Overview: Dried Live Oak wood weighs about 60 lbs. per cubic foot, making it among the heaviest of any North American tree. The wood is also resistant to disease and decay. The USS Constitution was one of the famous ships built of Live Oak timbers, receiving the nickname Old Ironsides due to the strength of its oak construction.

General Characteristics and Care: Unlike most oak trees, which are deciduous, southern Live Oaks are nearly evergreen. They replace their leaves over a short period of several weeks in the spring. Sweet, tapered acorns produced by the trees are eaten by birds and mammals. Live Oaks can be very messy trees. They are deciduous but shed most of their leaves in the early spring just as the new leaves are emerging. Every leaf is shed every year. In the fall they produce a lot of acorns that can cover the ground.

Zones: Zone 8 and south.

Exposure: It prefers full sun but tolerates more shade than other oaks because its leaves function throughout winter.

Soil: They can withstand occasional floods and hurricanes and are resistant to salt spray and moderate soil salinity. This species prefers a pH range between 5.6 and 7.5.

Water: Live Oak responds with vigorous growth to plentiful moisture on well-drained soil.

Fertilizer: Typically requires a balanced fertilizer with a N-P-K ratio of 10-10-10 or 12-4-8.

Bloom Period: Early spring. Fruit is a dry or hard acorn; cap is bowl-shaped, warty, scales and covers the top 1/3 of the shiny nut.

Flower Color: male: yellow-green catkin; female: green to reddish spike. Not showy.

Size: Live Oaks vary from a shrub-size to large and spreading tree-size: typical open-grown trees reach 20 m (66 ft) in height, with a limb spread of nearly 27 m (89 ft). Southern Live Oak is very long lived, and there are many specimens that are more than 400 years old in the deep southern United States.

Toxicity: Non-toxic to humans; tannin risk to livestock is low.

Pruning: Pruning when young is needed for strong structure.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-l-d&q=live+oak;>
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quercus_virginiana.;](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quercus_virginiana.) [https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ST564.;](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ST564.)
[https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ST564.;](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ST564.)

LOBELIA
(Lobelia erinus)
Campanulaceae



Geographical Origin: Southern Africa.

Overview: Several species are cultivated as ornamental plants in gardens and others are used in traditional medicine. The species used most commonly in modern herbalism is *Lobelia inflata* (Indian tobacco). Use of Lobelia for cardiovascular diseases may cause adverse effects. Lobelia has been used as "asthmador" in Appalachian traditional medicine. Two species, *L. siphilitica* and *L. cardinalis*, were once considered a cure for syphilis. Herbalist Samuel Thomson popularized medicinal use of Lobelia in the United States in the early 19th century.

General Characteristics and Care: The genus Lobelia comprises a substantial number of large and small annual, perennial and shrubby species, hardy and tender, from a variety of habitats, in a range of colors. Many species appear totally dissimilar from each other. However, all have simple, alternate leaves and two-lipped tubular flowers, each with five lobes.

Zones: Zones USDA 10 and 11.

Exposure: Part sun, shade, full sun.

Soil: Plants thrive best in well-drained, hummus-rich soil that is slightly acidic soil with a pH between 6.0 and 7.0.

Water: Lobelia plants need evenly moist soil and may require supplemental watering during hotter weather or long stretches without rain.

Fertilizer: Lobelias are heavy feeders. To keep Lobelia plants lush and vibrant with blooms, keep applying a liquid fertilizer or water-soluble balanced (10-10-10) fertilizer every 2 to 4 weeks throughout the growing season.

Bloom Period: Fall, spring, summer.

Flower Color: Blue, pink, white.

Size: Height: 4 to 18 inches; width: 4 to 6 inches.

Toxicity: Many members of the genus are considered poisonous, with some containing the toxic principle lobeline.

Pruning: Cutting back Lobelia plants improves their appearance and health. It also encourages the plant to produce more flowers over a longer period. The three types of pruning that benefit Lobelia plants are removing spent flowers, pinching, and cutting back.

Sources: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobelia.>; <https://www.bhg.com/gardening/plant-dictionary/annual/blue-Lobelia/>; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/Lobelia/cutting-back-Lobelia.htm>.; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/Lobelia/cutting-back-Lobelia.htm>.;

LOROPETALUM 'Purple Pixie'
(*Loropetalum chinense* var. *Rubrum*)
Hamamelidaceae



Geographical Origin: Natives of woodlands in Southeast Asia, China, and Japan.

Overview: Loropetalum is related to witch hazels. Also called Chinese Fringe Flower, Strap Flower, Chinese Witch Hazel. Their clusters of fringe-like, strappy flowers appear from late winter into spring and early summer. The plants have a natural, graceful shape and arching stems, attracting bees and butterflies, although deer tend to avoid them. They have rich green or purplish foliage that plays beautifully against green, gold, or blue tones.

General Characteristics and Care: Despite being native to China, Japan, and the Himalayas, this member of the witch hazel family (*Hamamelidaceae*) does quite well in Florida for those in zones 8–10a. This versatile shrub works equally well in foundation plantings and in landscape beds. Loropetalum gets its name from the Greek words for *strap* and *petal*, referring to the long, thin petals of its fringe-like blooms. The leaves are small and oval. Normally, Loropetalums have few serious pest or disease problems. However, root rot can be an issue, especially in poorly drained soils. In addition, leaves may become *chlorotic* (yellow) in alkaline (pH greater than 7.0) soil.

Zones: Zones 7-10 (USDA).

Exposure: They prefer full to partial sun.

Soil: They like well-draining, rich, loamy soil with a pH of 4.0 to 7.0 (acidic to neutral).

Water: Keep your Loropetalum well-watered during its first growing season. If planted in the fall or winter, you can water once every week or two. Planted during the springtime growing season, they should get watered every day or two for three or four months.

Fertilizer: It is a good idea to fertilize Loropetalums every two months during the growing season (not in fall or winter) with a balanced fertilizer formulated for acid loving plants at ground level. Using a slow-release fertilizer is recommended.

Bloom Period: Loropetalum bloom in spring and winter.

Flower Color: They have red, pink, purple, and white flowers with a tassel-like appearance.

Size: They grow 6-15 ft. tall and 3-15 ft. wide.

Toxicity: All parts of Loropetalum are non-toxic to dogs, cats, and children.

Pruning: Dark purple Loropetalum shrubs are pretty in clusters, in informal hedges, or limbed up to form small trees. They can even be heavily pruned for formal hedges.

Sources: [https://www.southernliving.com/garden/shrubs/loropetalum.;](https://www.southernliving.com/garden/shrubs/loropetalum;)
<https://myperfectplants.com/blogs/grow-guides/grow-guide-for-loropetalum.;>
<https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/shrubs/loropetalum/>

LYSIMACHIA 'Goldilocks' (Creeping Jenny)
(Lysimachia nummularia)
Primulaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Europe and temperate Asia. It was introduced in North America as an ornamental ground cover then naturalized.

Overview: Its common names include moneywort, creeping jenny, herb twopenny, and twopenny grass. It is a vigorous, prostrate, evergreen perennial and spreading rapidly and indefinitely by stem-rooting. The Latin specific epithet *nummularia* means "like a coin", referring to the shape of the leaves; hence the common names, such as "moneywort".

General Characteristics and Care: It is particularly associated with damp or even wet areas, though in cultivation it will tolerate drier conditions. It is cultivated as an ornamental plant, for groundcover where the range of its growth can be limited. It is also suitable as a bog garden or aquatic marginal plant. It is not a good choice for borders or near lawns as it spreads too aggressively and is difficult to control. The cultivar 'Aurea' (golden creeping Jenny) has yellow leaves and is somewhat less aggressive than the species. It has gained the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit.

Zones: USDA Plant Hardiness Zones: 3a-8b.

Exposure: Full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day). Partial Shade (Direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours).

Soil: Acid (<6.0); Alkaline (>8.0); Neutral (6.0-8.0).

Water: Likes moist soil and can even tolerate occasional flooding.

Fertilizer: Once your creeping Jenny is established, lightly fertilize it with a 10-10-10 solution in early spring.

Bloom Period: Summer

Flower Color: This plant often does not flower but may produce small yellow cup-shaped flowers at the leaf axils.

Size: A low-growing spreading plant that grows to 5 cm (2 in) in height.

Toxicity: Non-toxic to humans and animals.

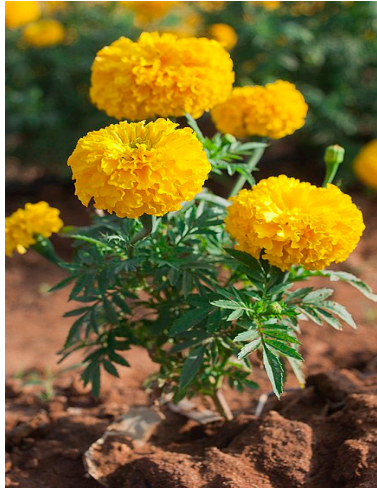
Pruning: Can be very invasive if not planted in a contained area. Cut back as necessary to maintain tidiness.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lysimachia_nummularia.; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/lysimachia-nummularia/>.; <https://www.thespruce.com/creeping-jenny-container-plant-4125237>.; <https://www.martinnursery.com/lysimachia-creeping-jenny/>.

MARIGOLD

(*Tagetes* spp.)

Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: These plants are native to Mexico, growing naturally from Mexico's valley down to the south and even reaching several other Latin American countries, but some species have become naturalized around the world.

Overview: In horticulture, they tend to be planted as annuals, although the perennial species are gaining popularity. Like all marigolds, they have a fibrous root system. The Latin *Tagētes* derives from the Tages in Etruscan mythology, born from plowing the earth. It likely refers to the ease with which plants of this genus come out each year either by the seeds produced in the previous year, or by the stems which regrow from the stump already in place.

General Characteristics and Care: Some of the perennial species are deer-, rabbit-, rodent- and javelina or peccary-resistant. The florets of *Tagetes* are rich in the orange-yellow carotenoid lutein and are used as a food color in Europe for foods such as pasta, vegetable oil, margarine, mayonnaise, salad dressing, baked goods, confectionery, dairy products, ice cream, yogurt, citrus juice, and mustard. In the United States, however, the powders and extracts are only approved as colorants in animal feed.

Zones: Marigolds grow well in planting zones 2 – 11. They will have a longer blooming season in zones 10 or higher, where temperatures don't dip close to freezing, even later in the winter.

Exposure: Marigolds need full sun. Marigolds do best in a sheltered site, particularly the large-flowered African marigolds, as the big blooms can be easily damaged by wind.

Soil: Depending on the species, *Tagetes* species grow well in almost any sort of soil. Most grow best in soil with good drainage, and some cultivars are known to have good tolerance to drought.

Water: When growing marigolds, check soil weekly: When the top inch is dry, it's time to water.

Fertilizer: A general-purpose fertilizer with equal amounts of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium.

Bloom Period: Most varieties bloom from early summer until hard frost in late fall.

Flower Color: Blooms naturally occur in golden, orange, yellow, and white colors, often with maroon highlights.

Size: *Tagetes* species vary in size from 4" to 6' tall.

Toxicity: Marigolds are non-toxic to humans but may cause skin irritation.

Pruning: Removing the dead heads encourages more flowers to be produced, while pinching out shoots of tall varieties can encourage bushy growth.

Sources: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marigold.>; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-l-d&q=marigold+care.>; [https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/grow-plants/how-to-grow-marigolds/.](https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/grow-plants/how-to-grow-marigolds/)

MELAMPODIUM (Butter Daisy, Black Foot Daisy)
(*Melampodium* spp.)
Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: These are rugged plants native to the tropical to subtropical regions that include Central America, Southwestern United States, California, Florida, the Caribbean, and South America.

Overview: Most of the species can be found in Mexico, five in the Southwestern United States, and three are scattered in Colombia and Brazil. Some sources say that the name *Melampodium* is derived from the Greek words μέλας (*melas*), meaning "black", and πόδιον (*podion*), meaning "foot". This refers to the color of the base of the stem and roots. Members of the genus are commonly known as Black Feet. Other authorities, however, maintain that this is in error, that the name comes from Melampus, a soothsayer of renown in Greek mythology.

General Characteristics and Care: The two most common species of *Melampodium* are *M. divaricatum* (known as butter daisy, with golden petals and darker yellow-orange centers) and *M. leucanthum* (known as black-foot daisy, with white petals and yellow centers). These true annuals are known for their constant display of sunflower-like blooms. Considered an easygoing plant, *Melampodium* will grow in regular garden soil. However, it does require a good amount of sunshine, so just be sure to plant in a location with full sunlight. Your plants also need plenty of water in the beginning.

Zones: 2 to 11 (true annual).

Exposure: Full sun (at least six hours daily).

Soil: Dry to medium moisture, well-drained; slightly acidic to slightly alkaline.

Water: This plant is native to areas with rocky soil, so it is well suited for nutritionally poor soils. But it will grow well in any well-drained soil, provided it is not overwatered.

Fertilizer: To keep your *Melampodium* blooming all season long, consider adding a slow-release fertilizer or a general-purpose liquid fertilizer to your soil.

Bloom Period: Flowering begins in May and continues until frost sets in.

Flower Color: White, yellow/gold.

Size: The genus consists of annuals and perennials or bushy plants, growing to a height of 3'. When fully grown, they tend to fall over. The terminal flower heads are about 1.5" wide.

Toxicity: Non-toxic to humans and pets.

Pruning: *Melampodium* also won't require a significant amount of pruning or deadheading. This is a low-maintenance plant.

Sources: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melampodium.>; <https://www.thespruce.com/melampodium-plant-profile-5070440.>; <https://www.wildflower.org/expert/show.php?id=5505&frontpage=true>.

Mondo Grass 'Dwarf' (Dwarf Lilyturf)
(Ophiopogon japonicus)
Asperagaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to China, India, Japan, Nepal, and Vietnam.

Overview: This dwarf variety, only half the size of others, creates a lush groundcover of dense, dark green, grass-like clumps. Excellent as an edging plant or tucked into rocks for a pleasing contrast. Striking in mass plantings in the landscape. Evergreen. The thick grass-like, basal leaves grow in dense masses. Small blue or white flowers bloom in drooping clusters that look like bunches of little grapes. Small blue berries follow the flowers.

General Characteristics and Care: *Ophiopogon japonicus* is a smaller species with many dark green, linear leaves 8 to 10 inches long and gracefully arching. In traditional Chinese medicine, both *O. japonicus* plants and tubers are known as *mai men dong* (Chinese: 麥門冬). Tubers are used as the cardinal herb for *yin* deficiency. According to the "Chinese Herbal Medicine Materia Medica", the herb is sweet, slightly bitter, and slightly cold; enters the heart, lung, and stomach channels; nourishes the *yin* of the stomach, spleen, heart, and lungs; and clears heat and quiets irritability.

Zones: Zones 6-11.

Exposure: Filtered sun, full sun, partial sun. Shelter from harsh afternoon sun in hot summer regions.

Soil: It prefers the slightly acidic, fertile, humus-rich soil typical of shady woodland areas.

Water: Keep soil moist, but not soggy.

Fertilizer: *Ophiopogon Japonicus* grows very slowly and doesn't require added fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Summer.

Flower Color: The flowers are tiny, pale lavender and bloom on stalks nestled in the leaves.

Size: Slowly forms foliage clumps only 4 to 6 in. tall and wide.

Toxicity: Used for medicinal purposes. Under recommended uses, non-toxic.

Pruning: Grows very slowly and does not need pruning. Clumps may be divided every 2 to 3 years in early spring.

Sources: <https://www.monrovia.com/dwarf-mondo-grass.html?srsltid=AfmBOorkdqPb860VF5bpxtORU-wCBpFEPjZo0DIqPypk76O477AphZS3.>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ophiopogon_japonicus.; https://www.bloomindesigns.com/ophiopogon/?srsltid=AfmBOopz1qLxL6oFyRE6QP8Fmv6B_VLSExEU2eFxivbvYEBhxEJwCjOW.

Monstera Deliciosa
(*Monstera deliciosa*)
Araceae



Geographical Origin: Southern Mexico, south to Panama.

Overview: The Monstera has been introduced to many tropical areas, and has become a mildly invasive species in Hawaii, Seychelles, Ascension Island and the Society Islands. It is very widely grown in temperate zones as a houseplant.

General Characteristics and Care: Its popular name as a houseplant, "Swiss cheese plant", or just "cheese plant", is commonly used to refer to the "eyes" or holes that develop in its leaves similar to the holes in some Swiss-type cheeses such as Emmental cheese.

Zones: Requires warmth and humidity; can be planted outdoors in USDA zones 10 through 12.

Exposure: Dappled sunlight (shade through upper canopy all day) to partial shade (direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours).

Soil: The soil should not be moist all of the time; it should be allowed to dry out slightly between waterings.

Water: It is a "moderately greedy plant," in that it needs to be watered just to keep the soil slightly moist.

Fertilizer: Choose a balanced liquid 20-20-20 fertilizer to feed the plant every few weeks during the growing season

Bloom Period: Usually blooms during the summer.

Flower Color: The flowers, which are rarely if ever seen on houseplants, are a 8-12" long, creamy-white, Jack-in-the-pulpit type.

Size: In ideal conditions the *Monstera deliciosa* is able to grow up to 20 m (66 ft) high in the wild. Indoors it usually grows 3-15 ft tall and 3-8 ft wide.

Toxicity: The plant contains oxalic acid, so all parts are poisonous except the ripe fruits. Young fruit, that still has the covering firmly attached, contains enough glass-like calcium oxalate crystals to cause immediate and painful irritation to the throat. *Monstera deliciosa* is moderately toxic to both cats and dogs. This crystal may cause injury to the mouth, tongue, and digestive tract. It also causes dermatitis by direct contact with cat and dog skin.

Pruning: Trim dead and dying leaves when necessary. Trim aerial roots if they get too unruly for the space, though tucking them back into the pot/soil is preferred. Unlike some other houseplants, their roots do not damage surfaces. Stems and leaves respond well to trimming and can be used for propagation.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monstera_deliciosa; <https://www.thespruce.com/how-to-grow-monstera-deliciosa-5072671>; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/monstera-deliciosa/>; <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/monstera-deliciosa/>

MUHLY GRASS
(*Muhlenbergia capillaris*)
Poaceae



Geographical Origin: Central and Eastern United states as well as Mexico and Guatemala.

Overview: Muhly grass is an absolute showstopper source of late-season color. As a native ornamental grass, it is a great complement to those landscape beds with fading summer annuals.

General Characteristics and Care: The plant includes a double layer; green, leaf-like structures surround the understory, and purple-pink flowers outgrow them from the bottom up. A North American native, pink muhly grass sounds too good to be true. Long-lived, with little to no insect or disease pests, and highly resistant to deer grazing, this ornamental grass is perfect for the low-maintenance garden.

Zones: Muhly grass is able to grow in zones 5 through 10.

Exposure: Prefers full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day) to light shade.

Soil: Muhly grass prefers a mildly acidic (pH range of 5.5 to 6.8), organic soil. Best grown in sandy or rocky, dry to medium moisture, well-drained soils. Tolerates poor soils and urban conditions.

Water: Although Muhly grass is tolerant of dry spells, it appreciates extra water in cultivation.

Fertilizer: This plant does well with a slow-release, medium-rate fertilizer.

Bloom Period: The plant is a "warm-season" plant, so it starts growing during the summer and is in full bloom during the autumn from September to November.

Flower Color: Masses of airy, open, loosely branched inflorescences (each up to 12" long) in pink to pinkish-red float above the foliage in a lengthy fall bloom.

Size: Pink muhly grass can reach a height of 4 feet and a width of 3 feet.

Toxicity: Per the ASPCA, Pink Muhly Grass is not listed as being toxic to dogs, nor any other mammals.

Pruning: Pink Muhly Grass should be cut back in early spring, but cut well above the crown (3-4") to preserve growing points.

Sources: <https://www.monrovia.com/plumetastic-pink-muhly-grass.html>;

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/muhlenbergia-capillaris/>;

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=285282>;

<https://hoffmannursery.com/plants/details/muhlenbergia-capillaris>; <https://growitbuildit.com/muhlenbergia-capillaris-guide-pink-muhly-grass/>

MULE PALM
(Butia capitata X Syagrus
Romanzoffiana--Butiagrus nabonnandii X)
Areaceae



Geographical Origin: Hybridized, not usually naturally occurring.

Overview: This beautiful palm is the result of *Butia capitata* (Pindo Palm, which is very cold hardy but the fronds are stiff, color is gray, and tree can be “squat”) being artificially pollinated by *Syagrus romanzoffiana* (Queen Palm, not particularly cold hardy but tall, stately, and has coconut-like fronds). The resulting hybrid is extremely frost hardy and can withstand temperatures to at least 14F (-10C) when large enough. It is possibly the nearest coconut lookalike for temperate regions that can currently be grown. The palm is sterile, hence its nickname, ‘Mule Palm.’

General Characteristics and Care: Although this tree can grow rather quickly, it is important to note that these plants are sterile and must go through a tedious hand-pollination process to reproduce them. In the rare event that a Mule Palm produces fruit and seeds, the seeds are known not to germinate.

Zones: Can be found in USDA Zones 8 through 11

Exposure: This tree should only be grown in full sunlight.

Soil: This palm is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments.

Water: It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out but it does like well-draining soil.

Fertilizer: The Mule Palm benefits from regular fertilization with a slow-release palm fertilizer having an analysis of 8-2-12 + 4% magnesium; or 8-0-12+4% magnesium.

Bloom Period: Mid-summer

Flower Color: Mule Palms may produce small pink/white/yellow flowers in large clusters. They should be pruned out before fruiting to prevent rotting fruit mess on the ground.

Size: Mule Palms will grow to be about 25 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 feet. They have a high canopy like the Queen Palm with a typical clearance of 6 feet from the ground.

Toxicity: It is mentioned that the palm is non-toxic however the seeds are poisonous.

Pruning: This is a high maintenance tree that will require regular care and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed.

Sources: https://www.palmpedia.net/palmsforcal/Butia_x_Syagrus;
<https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/nassauco/2017/05/21/fact-sheet-mule-palm/>;
https://plants.rogersgardens.com/12290002/Plant/27252/Mule_Palm/; <https://cherrylake.com/mule-palm/>;
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/EP020>; <https://www.bpsnurseries.com/product/palm-mule-palm-25-30g/872>.

MUSSAENDA PRETTY DWARF

(*Mussaenda luteola*)

Rubiaceae



Geographical Origin: Tropical Africa, Asia, and Malaysia

Overview: A small, erect perennial shrub and with its easy to care for requirements, it's a great addition to any garden. In Florida it is planted widely and is made into an attractive hedge or border when in full bloom.

General Characteristics and Care: While the dainty Dwarf Yellow Mussaenda is not as spectacular in size as the standard Mussaenda, this little beauty is a sweetheart. The flowers are small bright yellow star-shaped corollas with orange centres, joined by the palest creamy yellow bracts that look like white wings. The leaves are bright green and prominently veined and are about 1 inch long.

Zones: This Dwarf plant prefers a zone range from 9 to 12.

Exposure: It prefers a location in full sun or semi-shade.

Soil: Plant this eye-catching flowering shrub in well-drained soil and add some well-rotted manure to it. The *Mussaenda luteola* prefers a slightly acidic to neutral soil pH.

Water: Moderate watering, although it does not like to have soggy soil.

Fertilizer: Fertilize with Miracle Gro Bloom Booster once every 2 weeks. It requires little attention.

Bloom Period: The Dwarf usually flowers and fruits between the months of July to October.

Flower Color: The Mussaenda Pretty Dwarf blooms bright yellow and orange flowers, drawing in butterflies, hummingbirds, and other wildlife.

Size: This variety of Mussaenda comes in two sizes: a large shrub that can reach 5-10 feet tall or a smaller shrub at 2-5 feet in height depending on the variety.

Toxicity: Although there is no information about *Mussaenda luteola* toxicity, other Mussaenda species have shown to be non-toxic but caution is advised with ingestion.

Pruning: This variety needs frequent pruning to maintain its desired shape, however regular removal of dead or damaged foliage is necessary to maximize its blooming potential.

Sources: https://toptropicals.com/catalog/uid/pseudomussaenda_flava.htm;

<https://www.stabroeknews.com/2014/09/07/features/dwarf-mussaenda/>;

<https://www.efloraofgandhinagar.in/plant-details.php?cateUrl=shrub&plantUrl=mussaenda-luteola>;

BITTER ORANGE

(*Citrus x aurantium*)

Rutaceae



Geographical Origin: Southeast Asia

Overview: Many varieties of bitter orange are used for their essential oil, and are found in perfume, used as a flavoring or as a solvent, and also for consumption. The Seville orange variety is used in the production of marmalade and also used to make French *bigarade* (a sauce made with bitter orange juice and peel). Known for its rough, knobby peel.

General Characteristics and Care: *Citrus × aurantium* can be identified through its orange fruit with a distinctly bitter or sour taste. The fruit is inedible as it is very bitter but is essential in making marmalades and liquors such as Triple Sec. The sour orange became more widely grown as a rootstock for other citrus varieties than for its fruit because of its disease resistance and greater hardiness.

Zones: Can be found in zones 8 through 11

Exposure: Does best with full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day)

Soil: It does well in medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils with a pH of 5 - 8 but it can grow in very alkaline soils also. Prefers a pH in the range 6 - 7, tolerating 5.5 to 8.3

Water: The Bitter Orange likes moist but not overly wet soil. Water regularly, allowing the soil time to dry out between watering.

Fertilizer: Bitter orange can be fertilized with an organic fertilizer like compost or manure, as well as a commercial fertilizer like a slow-release mineral fertilizer. This species should be fertilized with an organic fertilizer in the fall, and then a slow-release mineral fertilizer in the winter.

Bloom Period: Blooms during Spring

Flower Color: Large white fragrant flowers about 1 1/2 inches wide singly or in small clusters

Size: This tree height can range anywhere from 5 to 30 ft while it can spread from 16 to 20 ft.

Toxicity: Bitter orange is also employed in herbal medicine as a stimulant and appetite suppressant, due to its active ingredient, synephrine. Bitter orange supplements have been linked to a number of serious side effects and deaths, and consumer groups advocate that people avoid using the fruit medically.

Pruning: Prune dense bushes in summer, weak, infested or infected branches if necessary, trim branches in the winter to help air circulation and allow light to pass through.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bitter_orange; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/citrus-x-aurantium/>; <https://tropical.theferns.info/viewtropical.php?id=Citrus+aurantium>; https://www.picturethisai.com/wiki/Citrus_%C3%97_aurantium.html#:~:text=Bitter%20orange%20can%20be%20fertilized,mineral%20fertilizer%20in%20the%20winter;

ORCHID TREE (MAGENTA)

(*Bauhinia blakeana* 'Hong Kong')

Fabaceae



Geographical Origin: China

Overview: Regarded as one of the most attractive flowering trees in the world, the *Bauhinia blakeana* is a small evergreen with an umbrella-shaped broadleaf canopy of bi-lobed, grey-green leaves, 6-8 in. long, resembling butterfly wings.

General Characteristics and Care: It is sterile, which means it does not generally produce seeds or fruits, and is a hybrid between *Bauhinia variegata* and *Bauhinia purpurea*.

Zones: The *Bauhinia blakeana* grows in a relatively narrow zone (USDA zones 9 to 11).

Exposure: This tree prefers full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day) to partial shade (direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours).

Soil: This beauty grows well in a variety of soil types ranging from chalk, clay, loam, sand, and acidic soil to alkaline soil, the soil must also have good drainage.

Water: Water on a regular basis, but, once it's well-established, give the tree time to dry out between waterings. This practice will promote heavier bloom.

Fertilizer: Fertilize 3 times a year - once each in spring, summer, and autumn - with a good granular fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Blooming profusely from fall to spring, ravishing orchid-like, rich rose-pink flowers shine against the foliage and attract hummingbirds.

Flower Color: Its large, orchid-like flowers come in a range of colors, from reddish to pink.

Size: The Orchid tree can grow from 12 ft. to 20 ft. in height and 20 ft. to 25 ft. wide.

Toxicity: This tree's parts are not toxic to dogs, cats or humans, but as with any garden plant not specifically grown as a food crop, it should not be eaten.

Pruning: It's very important to prune Hong Kong orchid trees while they are young, as they may grow somewhat irregularly. Regular pruning will give them a solid structure and create a uniform shape to the crown of the tree. The tree's upper branches tend to droop a bit as it grows, and will need to be pruned to keep walkways clear.

Sources: <https://expatliving.hk/facts-about-the-bauhinia-flower-hong-kong-orchid/>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bauhinia_%C3%97_blakeana; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/bauhinia-x-blakeana/>; <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/bauhinia-blakeana>; <https://www.south-florida-plant-guide.com/hong-kong-orchid-tree.html>; <https://www.thespruce.com/hong-kong-orchid-tree-guide-5213162#:~:text=Are%20Hong%20Kong%20orchid%20trees%20toxic%20This,food%20crop%2C%20it%20should%20not%20be%20eaten.>

ORCHID
(*Phalaenopsis* spp.)
Orchidaceae



Geographical Origin: Southern China, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and New Guinea.

Overview: They are a tropical epiphytic orchid, meaning that in nature they grow on the branches and trunks of trees, but are not parasitic. *Phalaenopsis* orchids are monopodial, growing vertically from a terminal growth point.

General Characteristics and Care: Moth orchid is an epiphytic, tropical, herbaceous perennial in the orchid family (Orchidaceae).

Zones: Winter hardy in USDA Zones 10 to 12.

Exposure: *Phalaenopsis* are categorized as low light orchids. Indirect light is best, but placement in a window with intense, direct light is acceptable if there is protection by a sheer curtain. Likes Dappled sunlight (Shade through upper canopy all day) to deep shade (Less than 2 hours to no direct sunlight).

Soil: Since they prefer warm, humid, damp but not soggy conditions, they are planted in pots with a bark-based medium that provides excellent drainage.

Water: Let the pot drain completely so that plants do not stand in water. Mature plants should be watered once weekly or more often in the heat of summer. Potting mix should dry some between waterings.

Fertilizer: Plants should be fertilized regularly with a balanced fertilizer twice monthly at half strength or weekly at quarter strength.

Bloom Period: *Phalaenopsis* orchids are one of the longest blooming orchid genera, with blooms lasting 2 to 6 months from late winter to spring.

Flower Color: Moth orchids come in a wider range of colors including, yellow, cream, peachy tones and purple-red, as well as spotted (so-called “harlequin” patterns), splashed and variously patterned flowers.

Size: Moth orchids can range from a few inches to 2 feet in height and up to 2 feet (but usually less) in spread.

Toxicity: The *Phalaenopsis* species is non-toxic to humans, horses, dogs, and cats.

Pruning: After your orchid has lost its last bloom it is time to remove the flower spike. Cut off the old flower spike near its base. This encourages the plant to rebloom within a year.

Sources: <https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/help-for-the-home-gardener/advice-tips-resources/visual-guides/phalaenopsis>; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/phalaenopsis/>;

OYSTER PLANT 'TRICOLOR'

(*Tradescantia spathacea*)

Commelinaceae



Geographical Origin: Southern Mexico to Guatemala

Overview: Previously known as the *Rhoeo spathacea*, this plant is a clumping, broadleaf evergreen, herbaceous perennial in the spiderwort family (Comelinaceae).

General Characteristics and Care: This plant forms a solid groundcover of upright leaves. The six to eight inch long, sword-shaped leaves are green above and purplish below.

Zones: They are hardy in USDA zones 9-12 and are also grown as ornamental houseplants.

Exposure: This groundcover prefers full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day) to partial shade (direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours).

Soil: Well-drained soils are a necessity since Oyster Plant is susceptible to a variety of leaf and especially root problems if over-watered.

Water: Allow the top 1 to 2 inches of soil to dry out between waterings and cut back on water during the winter. It is extremely drought-tolerant, even growing in cracks in a concrete wall.

Fertilizer: The oyster plant needs to be fed monthly in the spring and summer with a balanced plant food diluted to 1/2 the recommended strength. The plant does not require plant food during the autumn and winter.

Bloom Period: This low-maintenance plant may bloom at any time of the year, and it is easy to propagate by seed, division, or stem cutting.

Flower Color: An Oyster Plant produces small, three petaled, white flowers tucked inside purple, boat shaped spathes.

Size: This small plant grows 6 inches to 1 foot tall and 1 to 2 feet wide. It will spread.

Toxicity: The sap can cause severe pain if it gets in the mouth or eyes and skin irritations. An Oyster plant is toxic to cats, dogs, and small children so keep this colorful plant out of reach.

Pruning: It is recommend to vigorously prune the Oyster Plant during the spring to keep the plant looking full and bushy. It is best to prune using gloves to avoid skin irritation from the sap.

Sources: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/tricolor-mosesinthecradle-plant--207024914096066624/>;

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/tradescantia-spathacea/>;

https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/database/documents/pdf/shrub_fact_sheets/rhospaa.pdf;

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tradescantia_spathacea; <https://www.houseplant411.com/houseplant/moses-in-the-cradle-plant-how-to-grow-care-guide/>;

PAPYRUS DWARF 'BABY TUT'

(*Cyperus papyrus*)

Cyperaceae



Geographical Origin: Africa, Madagascar, and Southern Mediterranean

Overview: One of about 600 species in the genus *Cyperus* that is probably best known as the source of ancient Egyptian paper called “papyrus.” The starchy rhizomes and culms are edible, both raw and cooked, and the buoyant stems were used for making small boats.

General Characteristics and Care: The Papyrus Dwarf is a species of aquatic flowering plant belonging to the sedge family Cyperaceae. It is a tender herbaceous perennial, native to Africa, and forms tall stands of reed-like swamp vegetation in shallow water.

Zones: *C. papyrus* is considered to be hardy in USDA hardiness zones 9 and 10.

Exposure: These plants prefer full sun but will tolerate part shade, especially in very hot climates.

Soil: In terms of soil acidity, papyrus is adaptable; it grows at a pH between 6.0 and 8.0. However, papyrus grows only in wet, boggy soil such as swampy areas, around landscape ponds, and rain gardens that receive constant moisture. If the soil is not naturally wet, be prepared to water regularly.

Water: Papyrus is a marginal aquatic plant that grows in shallow bodies of water. It is not a deep-water plant and does not grow fully immersed in water. In any location that is not consistently moist, you will need to water papyrus daily.

Fertilizer: If planted in rich, fertile soil, papyrus plants usually do not require any fertilizer.

Bloom Period: The papyrus flowers in late summer. In extremely moist soil or roots sunken in the water the plant can flower all year long.

Flower Color: The brown/green fireworks-like flower heads are a bold and dramatic addition to both the garden and cut flower arrangements.

Size: It is a tall, stately plant, growing up to eight feet in height, although it ranges from 4 ft to 6 ft in height. While it can grow 3 to 4 ft in width.

Toxicity: *Cyperus papyrus* is non-toxic. Animals, especially felines, love its long leaves.

Pruning: In zones where papyrus is a perennial, cut back papyrus foliage to the ground level in the fall or early spring. If grown as an annual, pull out the entire plant and discard it in the fall.

Sources: <https://www.architecturalplants.com/product/cyperus-papyrus/>;
<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/papyrus-cyperus-papyrus/>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyperus_papyrus; <https://www.thespruce.com/papyrus-plants-for-water-gardens-4125678>; <https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/cyperus/graceful-grasses-king-tut-egyptian-papyrus-cyperus-papyrus>; [https://www.monstera-app.com/en/plants/varieties/papyrus-01HJKKGJJS0P3ZJVZ0BT2CRGSF#:~:text=Cyperus%20papyrus%20is%20non%2Dtoxic,the%20smaller%20species%20sold%20commercially.](https://www.monstera-app.com/en/plants/varieties/papyrus-01HJKKGJJS0P3ZJVZ0BT2CRGSF#:~:text=Cyperus%20papyrus%20is%20non%2Dtoxic,the%20smaller%20species%20sold%20commercially.;);

PEACE LILY
(*Spathiphyllum* spp.)
Araceae



Geographical Origin: Mexico, tropical America, Malesia, and islands of the western Pacific.

Overview: Peace Lily is a group of about 60 species of flowering plants that are semi-evergreen, perennial herbs typically grown as houseplants.

General Characteristics and Care: *Spathiphyllum* is a genus of herbaceous evergreen plants with dark green foliage that can reach 1 to 6 feet (0.30 to 1.83 m) in height. Rosettes of glossy, dark green leaves emerge directly from a low-lying or underground creeping stem.

Zones: Peace Lilies are not cold-hardy, so they can only be grown outdoors in warm, humid climates (USDA Zones 10, 11).

Exposure: The Peace Lily prefers deep shade (Less than 2 hours to no direct sunlight) to partial shade (Direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours). With too much sun, the leaves will scorch.

Soil: The *Spathiphyllum* spp. enjoy a soil with high organic matter, acidic to neutral pH with good drainage but likes moist soil.

Water: Keep the soil moist, but not soggy; allow it to dry between waterings.

Fertilizer: Fertilize Peace Lily once or twice a year (every six months or so) at the minimum.

You can fertilize your plant more frequently if you wish, especially if you want it to grow faster or bloom better.

Bloom Period: With enough light, Peace Lilies produce white to off-white flowers starting in the early summer and continue to bloom throughout the year in the right conditions.

Flower Color: This plant produces white calla-like flowers on tall stems above the foliage.

Size: The Peace Lily can grow 1ft to 6 ft tall and spread from 1 ft to 5 ft in width.

Toxicity: This plant is very misleading because it is not a true lily and can be poisonous to humans, cats, dogs, and horses.

Pruning: Peace Lilies do not need to be pruned but like every plant it will give off brown and yellowing leaves which should be trimmed away.

Sources: https://www.picturethisai.com/wiki/Spathiphyllum__Gorgosis_No._1_.html;

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/spathiphyllum/>;

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spathiphyllum#:~:text=Spathiphyllum%20is%20a%20genus%20of,as%20spath%20or%20peace%20lilies.&text=Hydnostachyon%20Liebm.&text=Spathiphylopsis%20Teijsm.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spathiphyllum#:~:text=Spathiphyllum%20is%20a%20genus%20of,as%20spath%20or%20peace%20lilies.&text=Hydnostachyon%20Liebm.&text=Spathiphylopsis%20Teijsm.;);

<https://www.almanac.com/plant/peace-lilies>; [https://costafarms.com/blogs/plant-finder/peace-lily?srltid=AfmBOooDGMhMi9mP8Z5gz0XnEPJlz-sPQoAG_spFKaVy_Ehb6iEQI8WH](https://costafarms.com/blogs/plant-finder/peace-lily?srltid=AfmBOooDGMhMi9mP8Z5gz0XnEPJlz-sPQoAG_spFKaVy_Ehb6iEQI8WH;);

PEACOCK GINGER (“Watermelon” Plant)
(Kaempferia pulchra)
Zingiberaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand

Overview: Peacock gingers have also been recognized under the Florida Garden Select Plant program organized by the Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association. This program promotes the use of superior and proven Florida plants. There are many species of this plant, each with different leaf designs and colors. Peacock gingers will gradually spread to fill an area, making them an ideal groundcover. Their knack for making new plants also means that you can easily lift and divide them, passing along the new plants to friends.

General Characteristics and Care: Keep in mind that peacock gingers are deciduous—they lose their leaves in winter only to have them return again in late spring—so be sure to plan your garden design appropriately. Their broad leaves and low growth habit allow peacock gingers to serve as a lovely stand-in for Hostas, a favorite of many gardeners who move to Florida from up north.

Zones: *Kaempferia* are suited for USDA hardiness zones 8-11.

Exposure: This plant needs semi-shade, full shade.

Soil: They will tolerate various types of soil, but they prefer a well-drained spot with rich soil.

Water: Requires a lot of water in moist well-drained soils.

Fertilizer: NPK and micronutrients are key for Peacock Ginger's health and blooms. Fertilize in growth phases, reduce in autumn, pause in winter.

Bloom Period: Most bloom throughout the summer

Flower Color: Its flowers are small, light purple. Known for its foliage, which is light to dark green, silver, and gray in stripes (hence the name “watermelon plant.”)

Size: Most varieties grow no more than a foot (31 cm.) tall. The leaves are showy and attractive, growing between 4 and 10 inches (10-25 cm.) long depending on the variety.

Toxicity: Peacock Ginger stands out for its non-toxic reputation. Expert consensus and anecdotal evidence align: this plant is safe for human interaction.

Pruning: These plants will die back during the winter and disappear, only to return in the spring. The dead foliage needs to be removed during the winter, with care not to disturb the shallow rhizomes underground.

Sources: <https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/peacock-ginger/>;

<https://www.nparks.gov.sg/florafauweb.>;

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/ornamental-ginger/grow-peacock-ginger-plants.htm>

PENTAS
(Pentas lanceolata)
Rubiacea



Geographical Origin: Pentas are native to the grasslands of East Africa and Yemen.

Overview: Pentas are low maintenance plants. Provided they get plenty of water, sunshine, and heat, they will perform beautifully and reward you with an abundance of blooms. *Pentas* are attractive to butterflies and hummingbirds. Some species are commonly cultivated and can be grown in pots and baskets. Species such as *Pentas lanceolata* can withstand full sunlight and need little to no care, growing even in locations that are dry and hot.

General Characteristics and Care: Pentas are warm region tropical blooming plants, so called because of the five-pointed petals on the flowers. It is a scrubby plant with an unruly shape, sporting oval to spear-shaped foliage. If you want more of these delightful plants, they are fairly easy to propagate. Pentas plants grow from seed or from softwood cuttings. Take cuttings in spring from terminal wood and dip the ends into a rooting hormone. Push the cut stem into a soilless medium, such as sand, that has been pre-moistened.

Zones: Pentas thrive in USDA plant hardiness zones 10 and 11.

Exposure: Pentas thrive in flower beds and containers that receive full sunlight (at least 6 hours daily). Although they will tolerate partial shade, they can become leggy and won't bloom as robustly.

Soil: They do best in well-draining, slightly acidic soil. A soil pH of 6 is ideal.

Water: Pentas like consistently moist soil.

Fertilizer: Fertilize in spring with a slow-release granular fertilizer. Mulch around in-ground plants to conserve water and repel weeds.

Bloom Period: These plants bloom from spring until the first fall frost, with up to 20 clusters of flowers on a single plant at any given time.

Flower Color: The flowers are generally pink, red, or white but new cultivars have introduced tones of purple and lavender and mixed blooms such as pink with red centers

Size: The plant is a shrub that gets up to 6 feet (2 m.) tall and 3 feet (1 m.) wide.

Toxicity: There are no significant toxicity concerns for pets or humans with *Pentas lanceolata*

Pruning: Deadhead Pentas flowers to encourage more blooms. Young Pentas plant care should include pinching off the stem ends to force a more compact plant. Pentas can be pruned to refresh the plant and improve shape.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=pentas;>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentas;>

<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/flowers/pentas/growing-penta-plants.htm>

PERENNIAL PEANUT

(*Arachis glabrata*)

Fabaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay.

Overview: Florida's hot summers and sandy soils can pose a challenge for some plants, but not this tough plant. Perennial peanut is a versatile groundcover that can be planted statewide and blooms all summer long with cheerful golden flowers. Perennial peanut is evergreen in frost-free areas of the state. In colder parts of the state, it will drop its leaves, exposing its brown rhizomes. If you're using perennial peanut as a lawn substitute, you can overseed the area with ryegrass to keep the area looking green throughout the winter. It is also used as a high-quality forage plant.

General Characteristics and Care: It can be planted on its own as a groundcover in larger beds or used as a lawn alternative in areas that receive low levels of foot traffic. It also can be interplanted within some existing lawns. This spreading groundcover is particularly effective on sites that have problems with erosion, since the rhizomes grow to form a mat that helps hold soil in place. Some of the best features of perennial peanut are its resistance to nematodes, pathogens, and drought. You can establish perennial peanut any time of year using rhizomes, plugs, or containerized plants, as long as you provide regular irrigation during the establishment phase. Spacing them 12 to 18 inches apart will allow them to fill in the space completely.

Zones: Hardiness to USDA Zones 8-11.

Exposure: Perennial peanut will flower best when planted in full sun, but it can also be planted in partial shade. Mowing established plants will make them bloom more, but it's not required.

Soil: Perennial peanuts grow best in well-drained soil, ideally sandy to sandy loam soil with a pH of 5.8 to 7.0.

Water: The perennial peanut's drought tolerance means that supplemental irrigation is not necessary during the dry season.

Fertilizer: No need for supplemental nitrogen or phosphorous fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Blooms from spring to first frost.

Flower Color: Bright golden yellow.

Size: With proper care (mowing) it will stay at about 4" in height.

Toxicity: Non-toxic to animals and humans.

Pruning: Can be pruned or mowed to maintain compactness and increase flowering.

Sources: [https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/perennial-peanut/;](https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/perennial-peanut/)

[https://www.freshsod.com/ecoturf-perennial-peanut/;](https://www.freshsod.com/ecoturf-perennial-peanut/) [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arachis_glabrata.;](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arachis_glabrata;)

[https://www.south-florida-plant-guide.com/perennial-peanut.html.](https://www.south-florida-plant-guide.com/perennial-peanut.html)

PETUNIA
(*Petunia* spp.)
Solanaceae



Geographical Origin: South America

Overview: The popular flower derived its name from the French, which took the word pétun, 'tobacco', from a Tupi-Guarani language. A tender perennial, most of the varieties seen in gardens are hybrids. Many members of the Solanaceae family contain potent alkaloids, and some are highly toxic, but many—including tomatoes, potatoes, eggplant, bell, and chili peppers—are used as food. The Maya and Inca believed that the scent of petunias had the power to ward off underworld monsters and spirits. Their flower-buds were bunched together for magical drinks.

General Characteristics and Care: Within their warmer growing zones, petunias will come back every year but still don't last very long--about three years. However, they will self-seed for continued growth. Many newer cultivars are able to withstand hotter temperatures, but no petunias thrive in chilly temperatures. When spring temperatures dip below 40 degrees F, either cover your outdoor petunias with frost cloth or bring them indoors.

Zones: USDA zones 9-11.

Exposure: They need at least five hours of sunlight every day.

Soil: Slightly acidic to neutral.

Water: They like moist but not sappy soil. Overwatering and fungi cause mushy petunia leaves; look for yellowing and drooping.

Fertilizer: Fertilize petunias monthly with a balanced fertilizer to support their rapid growth and heavy blooming. Double-flowered cultivars enjoy a biweekly dose of fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Spring, Summer, Fall

Flower Color: The tubular flowers are favored by some Lepidoptera species, including the Hummingbird hawk moth.

Size: Their height can vary from 6 inches to 18 inches, and they can spread along the ground anywhere from 18 inches to 4 feet.

Toxicity: Petunias are the teddy bears of the plant world when it comes to human safety. Non-toxic to humans and pets.

Pruning: Preventing leggy petunias requires pruning the branches by one quarter or half on a regular basis. Your petunia plant may be in full bloom when you do this, but it will keep your plant looking full and colorful, so it is worth it.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=petunia.;>
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petunia.;](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petunia.) [https://www.almanac.com/plant/petunias.;](https://www.almanac.com/plant/petunias.)
<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=petunias+toxicity.>

PHILODENDRON 'BRASIL' (Heartleaf Philodendron)

(*Philodendron hederaceum*)

Araceae



Geographical Origin: Central America, Caribbean

Overview: It is an evergreen climber growing to 3–6m (10–20 ft), with heart-shaped glossy leaves to 30 cm (12 in) long, and occasionally spathes of white flowers in mature plants. With a minimum temperature requirement of 15°C (59°F), in temperate regions it must be grown under glass or as a houseplant. *P. hederaceum* have simple leaves that are arranged in an alternate fashion, meaning single leaves are born on alternating nodes. Philodendron are particularly skilled at eliminating toxins such as formaldehyde from the air.

General Characteristics and Care: Philodendron Brasil is the common name for a colorful cultivar of heart-leaf philodendron (*Philodendron hederaceum*), a popular, vining houseplant. Philodendron Brasil has distinct splashes of lime-green variegation on the otherwise classic green leaves. *P. hederaceum* can grow with its roots both in and out of the soil, deeming it a semi-epiphyte.

Zones: USDA 10-11.

Exposure: Partial sun, shade

Soil: Moist but well-drained; Acidic, neutral.

Water: Water regularly but do not overwater or leave in soggy soil.

Fertilizer: Fertilize it monthly with a balanced fertilizer during the growing season in the spring and summer.

Bloom Period: Once it reaches maturity, it will flower every May to July, signaling to the world that it's ready to reproduce.

Flower Color: *Philodendron hederaceum* will eventually grow white flowers (approximately 15 years after planting). Inflorescences are rare; spike inflorescences are the most common when one does appear. They have the capacity to bear fruits as well. Philodendron fruits are typically orange, red, or white berries. ^[11]

Size: 4-6 ft. tall, 1-6 ft. wide.

Toxicity: Like most *Philodendron*, this plant is toxic to people and pets.

Pruning: Prune to remove dead foliage and to control its size.

Sources: <https://www.thespruce.com/philodendron-brasil-care-guide-5204203>.; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Philodendron+Brazil>.; <https://tedsgardens.com/rare-and-exciting-philodendrons-to-add-to-your-collection/>.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philodendron_hederaceum

PINK MIST (Pincushion Flower)
(Scabiosa japonica)
Caprifoliaceae



Geographical Origin: Pincushion flowers are native to Central and Southern Japan and introduced to the Dominican Republic.

Overview: The Pink Mist, or pincushion flower, gets its name from the beautiful pincushion-like flowers that cover the plant all summer. Scabiosa plants are considered exceptionally easy to care for as long as you provide them with enough light and well-draining soil. In ideal growing conditions, Pincushion flower is one of the best plants you can grow if you want to attract butterflies to your garden.

General Characteristics and Care: It is an excellent plant for Accent, border, containers, cottage gardening, edging, ground cover, massing, small spaces, cut flower gardens, and pollinator gardens. 'Pink Mist' pincushion flower is an incredibly long-blooming perennial with gorgeous, frilled blooms and pincushion-like centers. A number of cultivars are commercially available, including 'Blue Note', 'Blue Star', 'Blue Diamonds', 'Ritz Blue', and 'Ritz Rose'.

Zones: USDA hardiness 3-9.

Exposure: Full sun but part shade in hot climates.

Soil: Will grow in chalk, loam, and sand. Needs well-drained soil.

Water: It is drought tolerant. Needs medium to dry moisture, will not tolerate too much moisture or soggy conditions.

Fertilizer: These plants do not need any fertilizer but an early- or mid-season application of a 10-20-10 will promote blooming.

Bloom Period: Summer, Fall.

Flower Color: Flowers are lilac-pink and shades of blue.

Size: Grows 12-18" tall and 15" wide.

Toxicity: This plant is non-toxic to humans and animals.

Pruning: Deadheading will extend the blooming season. Cut back in the fall.

Sources: <https://www.gardenia.net/>; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Pink+Mist+plant.>; <https://butterflybushes.com/products/pink-mist-pincushion-flower.>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scabiosa_japonica.

PINK TRUMPET TREE (Pink Tabebuia)
(Tabebuia heterophylla)
Bignoniaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to the American tropics and subtropics from Mexico and the Caribbean to Argentina.

Overview: The Pink trumpet tree grows into a medium size deciduous tree with an open branching habit and rounded canopy shape. Foliage is comprised of dark green palmately divided leaves that have 5 leaflets. Bright pink to magenta tubular flowers develop in large round clusters in late winter to early spring when there are no leaves. Limited numbers of long bean pods develop after the flowering cycle and last into summer. Propagation is by seed or by vegetative methods. Vegetatively propagated trees would help ensure that trees bloom at the same time. Seed propagated trees flower at different times.

General Characteristics and Care: Pink trumpet tree is well suited for use as a street tree or for other areas such as in parking lot islands and buffer strips where temperatures are high and soil space limited. They will create a canopy over a sidewalk if they are properly pruned. They develop high, arching branches several years after planting by removing the lower, drooping branches. Pink trumpet tree can also be used as a shade tree for a residential property near the patio or deck, or it can be planted to provide shade to the driveway. The tree will provide lasting shade plus the added benefit of a sensational seasonal color show.

Zones: 10A through 11.

Exposure: Pink trumpet tree should be grown in full sun.

Soil: Tree will grow in clay; sand; loam; alkaline; acidic; needs well-drained soil.

Water: It is drought resistant.

Fertilizer: Tabebuia trees do not require frequent fertilization, but a light application of a balanced fertilizer once or twice per year can help to promote healthy growth and vigorous blooming.

Bloom Period: Spring and summer.

Flower Color: pink, white/cream/gray.

Size: Height: 20 to 30 feet; Spread: 15 to 25 feet.

Toxicity: All parts of the trumpet tree are considered poisonous, including the roots, seeds, leaves, and flowers. The plant contains toxic alkaloids causing muscle weakness, dry mouth, dilated pupils, and hallucinations.

Pruning: Pruning is needed for strong structure. Branches are subject to breakage.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=pink+tabebuia;>
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/ST616;> [https://waterwisegardenplanner.org/plants/tabebuia-impetiginosa/;](https://waterwisegardenplanner.org/plants/tabebuia-impetiginosa/)

PRAIRIE GENTIAN (*Lisianthus*)

(*Eustoma spp.*)

Gentianaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to North America.

Overview: These vibrant flowers look like roses—and they last even longer on display.

Lisianthus are often mistaken for roses or peonies. They are tender perennials or biennials often grown as annuals. Also known as the native plant 'Prairie Gentian', they return yearly, from northern Mexico to Colorado and Nebraska.

General Characteristics and Care: Lisianthus is in great demand for bridal bouquets and other special-occasion arrangements. Started with seeds, plants take up to six months to flower so most home gardeners start with commercial nursery plants and grow Lisianthus as annuals.

Zones: USDA 8–10.

Exposure: Plant Lisianthus in full sun, where it receives six to eight hours a day. In areas with very hot summers, a little afternoon shade won't hurt.

Soil: Moist, well-drained soil with a neutral pH.

Water: Provide about 1 inch of water per week to keep plants moist but not soggy allowing soil to dry out slightly in between. Overwatering leads to fungal diseases.

Fertilizer: Feed regularly with high phosphorous fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Summer, fall.

Flower Color: Lisianthus feature bell-shaped flowers with flaring lobes that bloom on one or more upright stems. Flowers commonly come in white, pink, purple, and cream, and occasionally yellow, apricot, rose, or red.

Size: They grow about 1 to 3 feet tall.

Toxicity: It is generally considered non-toxic to humans and pets.

Pruning: Deadhead consistently for repeat blooms.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=prairie+gentian#vhid=upT9Yy7s9yGfOM&vssid=1>; <https://www.thespruce.com/lisianthus-flowers-1315711>; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Lisianthus+toxicity>.

PRAYER PLANT (Peacock Plant, Watermelon Plant)
(Calathea makoyana)
Marantaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Espírito Santo state of eastern Brazil.

Overview: It has gained the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit. The Peacock Plant is celebrated for its visually striking leaves, which are oval in shape and boast a spectacular pattern of light and dark green, mimicking a peacock's feathers. The underside of each leaf is a rich purple, adding to its allure. It thrives under the canopy of lush tropical forests, where the environment is warm, humid, and shaded. It belongs to the arrowroot family.

General Characteristics and Care: The Peacock Plant is a clump-forming evergreen perennial with leaves emerging from a central rosette, creating a compact and bushy appearance. The leaves are open throughout the day to soak up the sun and close at night.

Zones: Hardiness zones 11-12 (very tropical). It is not frost-tolerant and must be kept in environments above 60°F (15°C) to thrive.

Exposure: Needs shade or dappled sunlight. This plant when outdoors will completely die back in the winter. In Florida, it returns when the soil temperature rises.

Soil: Loam, chalk, clay, sand. Can take acid, neutral, or alkaline soils.

Water: Water a couple of times a week, but always testing the soil first to see if watering is necessary. During winter, when the plant isn't in an active growing phase you should reduce watering frequency and use tepid/room temperature water. Drainage is essential.

Fertilizer:

Bloom Period: The small blooms may appear during the summer months when the temperature and humidity are high.

Flower Color: Though *Calathea makoyana* can bloom, producing small white or purple flowers, it is a rare occurrence unless outdoors. The plant is primarily grown for its stunning foliage.

Size: Grows from 8" to 1'.

Toxicity: Calathea plants are non-toxic to cats, dogs, and humans, making them a safe choice for pet owners and families. Their sap may irritate sensitive skin.

Pruning: It is not necessary to prune peacock calatheas. However, if you see any yellow or dried leaves on the plant, simply cut these off at the base.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Prayer+Plant+Makoyana.;>

<https://www.gardenia.net/plant/calathea-makoyana-peacock-plant.;>

<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Peacock+plant+pruning.;>

<https://housing.com/news/how-to-grow-and-maintain-peacock-plant/>

PURPLE BEAUTYBERRY

(*Callicarpa americana*)

Lamiaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to east and southeast Asia, Australia, Madagascar, south-eastern North America and South America.

Overview: The berries last well into the winter or dry season and are an important survival food for birds and other animals, though they will not eat them until other sources are depleted. The berries are highly astringent but are made into wine and jelly.

General Characteristics and Care: American beautyberry has been used as a folk remedy to prevent mosquito bites. Four chemicals isolated from *Callicarpa* have been shown to act as insect repellents: borneol, callicarpenal, intermedeol, and spathulenol. Found in woods, moist thickets, wet slopes, low rich bottomlands, and at the edges of swamps in the Piney Woods, Post Oak Woods, Blackland woodlands, and coastal woodlands. Moist woods; coastal plains; swamp edges, bottomlands.

Zones: 6-11.

Exposure: Likes partial shade.

Soil: Moist, rich soils, Sandy, Sandy Loam, Medium Loam, Clay Loam, Clay, Acid-based, Calcareous.

Water: In a garden setting, beautyberry prefers moist, well-drained soils with some organic matter. Beautyberry shrubs also tolerate clay soils as long as they don't remain wet for long periods. Give the shrub about one inch of water weekly during dry periods; it can tolerate some drought.

Fertilizer: For mature plants, a slow-release fertilizer is ideal, applied once in the spring.

Bloom Period: May, June, July.

Flower Color: The flowers are in clusters, white to pinkish. The fruit is a berry, 2–5 mm diameter and pink to red-purple with a highly distinctive metallic lustre, are very conspicuous in clusters on the bare branches after the leaves fall.

Size: Beautyberry most often grows 3-5 ft. tall and usually just as wide. It can reach 9 ft. in height.

Toxicity: Beautyberry is non-toxic to humans and animals.

Pruning: It can be cut to 12" above the base each winter to encourage more compact growth, flowers and fruit.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=beautyberry;>
https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=caam2; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Callicarpa>

PURPLE HEART (Purple Queen)
(Tradescantia pallida purpurea)
Commelinaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to northeast Mexico (from Tamaulipas to Yucatán)

Overview: *Tradescantia pallida* is a species of spiderwort native to the Gulf Coast region of eastern Mexico. The cultivar *T. pallida* 'Purpurea' is commonly called Purple Secretia, Purple Heart, Purple Queen, and Wandering Jew. Edward Palmer collected the type specimen near Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas in 1907.

General Characteristics and Care: Purple Heart has lance-shaped leaves up to 7" long on fleshy stems. The fleshy leaves are covered with pale hairs and form a sheath around the stem. The stems are quite fragile and break off easily if brushed or kicked too hard. Purple heart can be used as a ground cover, cascading in baskets, as a trailer in mixed containers or as a houseplant. They are best used in masses for in-ground plantings and will spread relatively quickly. The deep purple leaves are a nice contrast to gold, chartreuse, or variegated foliage, and a great complement to pink, light purple, or burgundy blossoms on other plants. Plants are easily propagated by taking cuttings from any part of the plant – just shove a node into the soil or potting mix and it will usually root

Zones: Hardy in zones 7-10.

Exposure: Grow purple heart in full sun for best color.

Soil: Loamy, sandy, clay, silt, moist but well-drained.

Water: Plants are drought tolerant and thrive on neglect, but also tolerate frequent watering.

Fertilizer: Fertilize monthly when actively growing.

Bloom Period: Summer.

Flower Color: Tiny pink.

Size: A low-growing trailer. Quickly reaches 12 to 18 in. tall and wide.

Toxicity: The juice from the leaves or stems may cause skin redness and irritation in some people and dogs, but this is not a common problem.

Pruning: Cut plants back after flowering to prevent them from getting spindly.

Sources: [https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Tradescantia+setcreasea+purpurea.](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Tradescantia+setcreasea+purpurea.;); [https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/purple-heart-tradescantia-pallida/.](https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/purple-heart-tradescantia-pallida/); [https://www.monrovia.com/purple-heart.html.](https://www.monrovia.com/purple-heart.html); [https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/plant-library/purple-heart/.](https://txmg.org/hendersonmg/plant-library/purple-heart/)

PURPLE QUEEN'S WREATH

(*Petrea volubilis*)

Verbenaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Tropical Americas

Overview: The genus was named in honor of Robert James Petre, an English patron of botany.

General Characteristics and Care: *Petrea volubilis*, is commonly known as Purple Wreath, Queen's Wreath or Sandpaper Vine. The vine's rough textured leaves resemble sandpaper, giving it the common name "Sandpaper Vine." It is semi-evergreen, dropping leaves in colder climates. It is highly drought and wind tolerant and moderately tolerant of salt making it a good choice for coastal landscapes. This vine does need a support structure and looks great climbing over a fence or up a trellis.

Zones: Winter hardy to USDA Zones 10-11.

Exposure: Queen's Wreath grows best in a full sun. Plants grown in the shade will not flower profusely, and surprisingly for a tropical vine, *Petrea* will cope with the occasional very mild frosts.

Soil: Soil pH preference is between 6 to 7.

Water: *Petrea* will tolerate a range of conditions once established, from moist to dry but perform best in moist but well-drained soil. They will tolerate coastal conditions as long as they are protected from strong wind.

Fertilizer:

Bloom Period: Flowers throughout the year mostly from late winter through early summer.

Flower Color: Purple/lavender petals and purple calyx.

Size: In its native habitat, this plant can grow rapidly to 25-40', but in cultivation is more often seen as a much smaller vine or trained as an espalier.

Toxicity: Queen's Wreath is safe for humans but may be toxic to dogs.

Pruning: Prune off wayward branches after flowering to keep in the plant tidy. This can be carried out after flowering in autumn

Sources: <https://www.nparks.gov.sg/florafaunaweb/flora/1/4/1471.>; <https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q6073575.>; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Petrea+volubilis.>; [https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/petrea-volubilis/.](https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/petrea-volubilis/);

PURSLANE/PORTULACA

(*Portulaca oleracea*)

Portulacaceae



Geographical Origin: Most likely Central Asia, the Near East, or Europe, or all of the above. There is evidence that purslane has been eaten for at least 2,000 years; it was cultivated in ancient Egypt and was enjoyed by the ancient Romans and Greeks.

Overview: Purslane, also known as common purslane, moss rose, little hogweed, pigweed, fatweed, or pulse, is found worldwide. In the U.S., it is often considered a nuisance. But in other parts of the globe, it is regularly eaten at meals or used as medicine.

General Characteristics and Care Purslane, or *Portulaca oleracea*. The Latin name alone has culinary meaning. *Port* meaning “gate” referring to the seed covers and *oleracea* meaning “kitchen vegetable”. Purslane is highly nutritious and even contains Omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants. The flavor is much milder than many greens in summer. All parts of the plant are edible.

Zones: Grown as a short-lived perennial in zones 10-11.

Exposure: Blooms best when planted in full sun.

Soil: Likes sandy and dry soils with good drainage but it can grow in poor soils. Soil pH: range of 5.5-7.5.

Water: Because it's a succulent (a plant that can retain water), purslane thrives in climates that can't sustain a lot of other plants. Its sturdy nature makes it a great option for very dry, hot regions or for gardeners who don't trust themselves to water regularly.

Fertilizer: Scatter a balanced, slow-release fertilizer around the base of the plant such as a 10-10-10 NPK ratio.

Bloom Period: From May through September.

Flower Color: Purslane has small flowers that bloom in yellow, orange, white, or pink.

Size: Growing 4-8 inches tall with a width of 12-16 inches, this beautiful trailing succulent is perfect for spillers in containers, hanging baskets or as ground cover.

Toxicity: Purslane is not toxic to humans. One note of caution, however: Because, like spinach or sorrel, purslane contains high amounts of oxalates, you should not eat too much at a time. All parts of Purslane contain soluble calcium oxalate, which can be toxic to dogs.

Pruning: Trim leggy stems at a 45-degree angle just above a leaf or bud to encourage bushier growth. Prune back those areas deemed invasive.

Sources: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portulacaceae>.;

<https://www.southernliving.com/garden/flowers/ornamental-purslane>.;

<https://www.webmd.com/diet/health-benefits-purslane>.;

<https://plantaddicts.com/purslane-care/>.;

<https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/indianriverco/2022/07/25/purslane-in-the-summer-garden/>.

RED BAY
(Persea borbonia)
Lauraceae



Geographical Origin: Southeastern United States

Overview: The wood can be used as an interior finish and for boat building; the dried leaves make an excellent substitute for tropical bay and are used in the same way for seasoning. Red Bay is a small, evergreen tree in the laurel family. It belongs to the genus *Persea*, a group of evergreen trees including bays and the avocado. *Persea borbonia* has several common names including tisswood, scrubbay, shorebay, and swampbay.

General Characteristics and Care: *Persea borbonia* is cultivated as an ornamental tree for gardens and parks. Deer and bears also eat the leaves and fruits of red bay. Birds, including turkey, eat the plant's bitter fruit. The plant is not widely used now for medicinal purposes; however, members of the Seminole tribe formerly used it as an emetic to induce vomiting. The Red Bay is moderately resistant to deer damage, but unfortunately, the wood is brittle and subject to wind damage.

Zones: USDA Plant Hardiness Zones: 7a, 7b, 8a, 8b, 9a, 9b

Exposure: Needs full sun. It cannot grow in the shade.

Soil: Needs good drainage. Will grow in clay, loam, and sand. Needs a pH of mildly acid, neutral, and basic (mildly alkaline) soils.

Water: Those growing in the ground should not need to be watered once established, assuming that the soil is moist.

Fertilizer: Feed them monthly in the spring and summer with a well-balanced liquid plant food.

Bloom Period: Late summer to fall.

Flower Color: The Red Bay has small, yellow-green groups of flowers that mature in clusters.

Size: Red bay is an evergreen tree that may grow 30 to 70 feet tall.

Toxicity: Bay leaves are not toxic and can be eaten without harm. However, they remain stiff even after cooking and may pose a choking hazard or cause harm to the digestive tract if swallowed whole or in large pieces.

Pruning: Pruning to keep lateral branches less than half the diameter of the trunk will increase the tree's longevity and help prevent branches from separating from the trunk.

Sources: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/persea-borbonia/>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persea_borbonia.; <https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/woody/Pages/perbor/perbor.shtml>.; https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=pebo.;

RED STAR TI (Hawaiian Ti)
(Cordyline australis)
Asparagaceae



Geographical Origin: Its original native distribution is unknown, but it is believed to be native to the region from Bangladesh to Mainland Southeast Asia, South China, Taiwan, Island Southeast Asia, New Guinea, and Northern Australia.

Overview: The plant is of great cultural importance to the traditional inhabitants of the Pacific Islands and Island Southeast Asia. It is also cultivated for food, traditional medicine, and as an ornamental for its variously colored leaves. It is identified by a wide variety of common names, including ti plant, palm lily, and cabbage palm.

General Characteristics and Care: *Cordyline fruticosa* flowers are a traditional treatment for asthma, and their anthocyanin content has been assessed to see if they might be commercial herbal remedy. Ti is a popular ornamental plant, with numerous cultivars available, many of them selected for green or reddish or purple foliage. Red Star Cordyline is drought tolerant and incredibly low maintenance. It's beautiful burgundy foliage holds year-round and is perfect for modern landscapes or for containers. Red Star Cordyline are perfect for modern, low-maintenance landscapes as a focal point, or as a stunning backdrop in a layered garden.

Zones: Zones 7-9.

Exposure: The Ti plant needs full sun and does not prosper in shade. It will also lose its color.

Soil: *Cordyline australis* 'Red Star' does best in well-draining soil.

Water: Water the plant regularly during the growing season, allowing the top inch of soil to dry out between waterings. Reduce watering in winter or during periods of dormancy.

Fertilizer: Apply slow release once per year in early Spring.

Bloom Period: Summer.

Flower Color: Mature plants produce branches of sweet-smelling, ivory-white to fuchsia flowers, which are extremely attractive to bees.

Size: A Ti plant can reach 6'-10' in height and 3' in width.

Toxicity: *Cordyline* 'Red star' has no toxic effects reported.

Pruning: Although pruning isn't necessary with these plants, if you'd like a fuller look, you can cut back the tallest "heads," which will promote sprouting from the sides. Don't toss out what you cut, as most cuttings will easily root and grow if you want to start a new plant or give one to someone else.

Sources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cordyline_fruticosa#/media/File:Starr-010420-0119-Cordyline_fruticosa-red_habit-Kahului-Maui_\(24424037342\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cordyline_fruticosa#/media/File:Starr-010420-0119-Cordyline_fruticosa-red_habit-Kahului-Maui_(24424037342).jpg);

<https://www.jberrynursery.com/portfolio/cordyline-red-star>; <https://greg.app/plant-care/cordyline-australis-red-star#light-needs>

RED 'SWAMP' MAPLE

(*Acer rubrum*)

Sapindaceae



Geographical Origin: North America

Overview: Each autumn the leaves of these trees erupt into a blaze of yellow, orange, and red. The colorful show lasts for several weeks. As a native plant, red maple is also a favorite of local wildlife. It is an abundant seed source and blooms in the winter, when flowers are rarer. Birds in particular are attracted to this inviting tree.

General Characteristics and Care: It will not grow well in alkaline soil or dry, drought-like conditions with overwhelming heat. It also tends to make a mess once it matures—dropping flowers in spring, helicopter seeds in summer, and many leaves in the fall.

Zones: Hardiness zones: 3 to 9. Red Maple is usually found in USDA Hardiness Zones 4A through 9B. Gardeners in South Florida should not be discouraged, however. Wild populations of Red Maple exist in wet areas as far south as mainland Monroe County.

Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.

Soil: Tolerates wet soil making it an excellent choice for a rain garden. Drought tolerant once established. Low salt tolerance. Deep, moist, acidic soil results in the healthiest red maples. Needs a pH of 4.5 to 6.5.

Water: Also known as “swamp maple,” red maples are naturally found in swampy areas. This tree does best in wet, acidic soil with high organic matter. They will grow in other locations if they receive adequate irrigation.

Fertilizer: Potassium (K), or potash, is the all-rounder, enhancing overall health and disease resistance. A balanced N-P-K ratio for Red Maples is typically 10-6-4. Occasional use of Epsom salts, at the same rate as your fertilizer, can help release the nutrients to your maple.

Bloom Period: Red maples are one of the first trees to flower in spring, usually March to April

Flower Color: The tree produces small reddish to yellowish flowers on slender stalks with petals that appear before leaf budburst. Most trees have both male and female flowers (usually on separate branches) but occasionally trees only produce female flowers.

Size: At maturity, red maples can be 60 to 75 feet tall and 25 to 35 feet wide.

Toxicity: Red Maple's gallic acid and tannins are harmful if ingested, especially by children.

Pruning: Red maples have a fast growth rate and require pruning to develop a strong structure. Remove branches that compete with the central leader. In general no branch should grow to be larger than half the diameter of the trunk. Branches that reach out at a wide angle from the trunk are the least prone to breakage.

Sources: <https://tidewatertrees.com/product/acer-rubrum-brandywine-red-maple/>; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=red+maple+pH.>; <https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/trees/red-maple/>;

ROYAL POINCIANA

(*Delonix regia*)

Fabaceae



Geographical Origin: Madagascar

Overview: This tree was given to BHC by John Guziejka, from UCF Landscape and Natural Resources. It was about 2' tall and in a pot, where we kept it for several months. It was not doing well, so we planted it in the front of the building, on the north side of the entrance, where it is doing very well so far (7/7/24) and growing quickly.

General Characteristics and Care: It is noted for its fern-like leaves and flamboyant display of orange-red flowers over summer. In many tropical parts of the world, it is grown as an ornamental tree and in English it is given the name royal poinciana, flamboyant, phoenix flower, flame of the forest, or flame tree (one of several species given this name). It does not tolerate cold or frost.

Zones: 10-12. Highly tropical.

Exposure: They require full sun exposure, ideally around 6 hours daily,

Soil: The royal poinciana requires a tropical or near tropical climate but can tolerate drought and salty conditions. It thrives in open, free-draining sandy or loamy soil enriched with organic matter. The tree does poorly in heavy or clay soils. Likes a pH of 6.1-7.8.

Water: The tree will flower more profusely when kept slightly dry.

Fertilizer: Give the tree a balanced liquid fertilizer for four to six weeks after planting and then two to three times per year for the first three years.

Bloom Period: Flowers first appear in clusters between May and July and stay on the tree for a month or more.

Flower Color: *Delonix regia* bursts into a giant umbrella of stunning, shocking deep red, crimson, orange and magenta flowers.

Size: The tree is often broader than tall, growing about 40 feet high and 60 feet wide.

Toxicity: Toxicity is a concern for dog owners, as the seeds and seed pods can poison dogs if ingested. Symptoms to watch for include vomiting, drooling, and difficulty swallowing. The *royal poinciana* needs to be kept away from small children. Its bark, flowers, leaves, seed pods, and especially its seeds contain *toxic* glycopeptides.

Pruning: It's important to prune flame trees to create a strong tree structure, as the limbs are susceptible to breakage in high winds. Around late March or early April, or right before spring growth starts in your area, prune any major branches that are half the diameter of the trunk or below 8 to 12 feet from the ground.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delonix_regia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delonix_regia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delonix_regia;).; <https://www.thespruce.com/royal-poinciana-growing-profile-3269287>.

SALVIA ‘Mystic Spires Blue’; ‘Indigo Spires’
(*Salvia haematodes*)
Lamiaceae



Geographical Origin: *Salvia* is one of the most widespread members of the Lamiaceae family and can be found in both the Old and New Worlds.

Overview: Since its chance discovery almost 40 years ago, Indigo Spires salvia has been one of the most loved flowers in Southern gardens. This persevering perennial was found growing in the Huntington Botanical Garden in the 1970s and was made available in 1979. John MacGregor, horticulturist at the California garden, described his find as a "sterile hybrid, courtesy of "the bees." He named it Indigo Spires. Since its discovery almost 40 years ago, Indigo Spires salvia has been one of the most loved flowers in Southern gardens. *Salvia* 'Indigo Spires' is a hybrid cross between *S. longispicata* and *S. farinacea*.

General Characteristics and Care: It is the largest genus of plants in the hardy sage family, Lamiaceae, with nearly 1000 species of shrubs, herbaceous perennials, and annuals. It will attract hummingbirds and bees. It is considered one of the most easy-to-care-for ornamentals.

Zones: 7-11.

Exposure: Plant in full sun to light shade.

Soil: Salvias prefer slightly acidic soil (5.5 to 6.5 pH).

Water: Keep plants in dry to medium soil dampness.

Fertilizer: *Salvia* plants are light-feeders and do not require many additional additives to boost growth and quality blooms. Aged compost will provide all the necessary nutrients that will help a salvia thrive.

Bloom Period: It is a nonstop bloomer from early summer through fall.

Flower Color: Dark blue to violet.

Size: *Salvia* is a vigorous hybrid prized for its 12- to 15-inch-long, twisting flower spikes. It will grow from 1 to 3 feet tall.

Toxicity: *Salvia* 'Indigo Spires' has no toxic effects reported.

Pruning: Indigo Spires tends to keep growing and then falling over under its own weight. Constant pruning and pinching will keep it in bounds, and removing the flower spikes after most of the flowers have dropped off will encourage more blooming. In Florida, it can be cut back to the ground repeatedly and will put up new shoots, then bloom.

Sources: <http://extension.msstate.edu/news/southern-gardening/2006/mystic-spires-blue-hot-perennial-salvia.;>
<https://www.finegardening.com/plant/indigo-spires-sage-salvia-indigo-spires.;>
<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=salvia+pH.;>
<https://www.gardenstylesanantonio.com/plants/salvia-indigo-spires/>

SALVIA ‘Sally Fun DeepOcean’ [Mealycup Sage]
(*Salvia farinacea*)
Lamiaceae



Geographical Origin: Mexico, Central and Western Texas, and New Mexico

Overview: Mealycup Sage, *Salvia farinacea*, has powdery white felted hairs on the flower calyx (the outermost whorl of the flower) and upper stems; this extremely fine white pubescence is referred to as farinose (“mealy” means covered with powdery meal; farina is Latin for flour or meal).

General Characteristics and Care: Because it is fast-growing and bears multiple spikes of blue flowers in its first year (flowering in less than four months from seed), it is frequently grown as an annual where it will not survive the winter. In Florida, it can be cut back and may be perennial if it overwinters. Most salvias have hairy or velvety leaves, so the shiny leaves set this species apart. Butterflies, bees and hummingbirds find the lightly fragrant (often described as grape scented) flowers very attractive.

Zones: Hardy in zones 7 through 10.

Exposure: Grow Mealycup Sage in full sun to partial shade.

Soil: It adapts well to nearly all types of soils (including heavy clay and sandy soils).

Water: Although it prefers good moisture levels, it is fairly drought tolerant once established. It will be weak and leggy in wet soils.

Fertilizer: Salvia thrives with the correct balance of nutrients. A fertilizer with an NPK ratio of 10-6-4 is a good choice, providing a blend that supports lush foliage and vibrant blooms.

Bloom Period: Plants bloom from early summer to frost on tall, sturdy flower stems growing from the clusters of leaves in axillary and terminal racemes that somewhat resemble lavender.

Flower Color: Dark blue, light blue, purple, or white flowers are borne in dense whorls along each 4- to 8-inch-long flower spike.

Size: Up to 4’ tall and wide.

Toxicity: Low toxicity risk but keep Mealycup Sage away from children. Skin irritation is possible, especially for sensitive individuals.

Pruning: There are a variety of reasons salvias flop, including too much water, from rain or irrigation, not enough sun, or too much fertilizer. If your salvia plant has become leggy and flopped over you can either provide support for the plant with stakes or deadhead the flowers and let new ones grow in.

Sources: <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/mealycup-sage-salvia-farinacea/>;
<https://www.gardendesign.com/perennials/salvia.html>.

SAMOAN SUNSHINE TREE (Variegated Coral Tree)
(Erythrina variegata [indica])
Fabaceae (Leguminosae)



Geographical Origin: Eastern Africa, Indian Ocean Islands, Southeast Asia, the Pacific Islands.

Overview: The bark of this herbaceous tree is used to treat fever in Burma; liver problems in China; and dysentery in Indonesia. The bark has also been used to treat rheumatism, as a painkiller in toothache and to promote the expulsion of phlegm from the respiratory passages.

General Characteristics and Care: This is a spreading tropical and subtropical tree legume, renowned as an ornamental for its striped leaves and conspicuous red blossoms. In India, it is one of the most used forage tree legumes used as fodder for small ruminants. It is often used as a hedgerow and windbreak.

Zones: 9 to 11.

Exposure: Needs full sun and does not tolerate cold, although the one in the BHC garden has survived 22 Florida winters thus far.

Soil: The trees prefer a deep, well-drained, sandy loam, but they tolerate a wide range of soil conditions from sands to clays. They can tolerate from strongly acidic to alkaline soils (pH 4.5 to 8.0).

Water: It is drought tolerant, as it is native to monsoonal areas with several months of dry season. It needs almost no water when it is leafless in the winter.

Fertilizer: A slightly basic fertilizer should be used as the plant will tolerate but does not develop well in a highly acidic environment.

Bloom Period: It begins flowering in May and continues to bloom all summer, although the tree in the BHC garden has never flowered in 22 years nor produced seed.

Flower Color: This tree is said to produce long, deep red, pendulous red flowers and seed pods.

Size: This herbaceous tree will grow from 15 to 80' tall. The one currently in the BHC Garden was topped off during a hurricane but regrew radiating branches from the trunk (pollarding).

Toxicity: A variety of unique, complex alkaloids are found in the various species of Erythrina. The alkaloids are present in all parts of the plant, but especially in the flowers and seeds. All the alkaloids may have toxic effects when ingested and have primarily a curare like effect, causing paralysis.

Pruning: The ideal time to cut a Sunshine Tree is actually spring, after no new foliage is being put forth. The pruning may then be aggressive and be adapted to the local space conditions.

Sources: <https://garden.org/plants/view/128265/Variegated-Coral-Tree-Erythrina-variegata/>;
<https://www.nparks.gov.sg/florafaunaweb/flora/5/6/5622>.; https://www.doc-developpement-durable.org/file/Culture/Arbres-Bois-de-Rapport-Reforestation/FICHES_ARBRES/Arbres-non-classes/Erythrina-coraltree.pdf;

SEDUM 'Lemon Coral'
(*Sedum rupestre* 'Lemon Coral')
Crassulaceae



Geographical Origin: Central and Western Europe

Overview: The sedums are also called **Stonecrop**, because they are native to the mountainous regions of Europe. The native species have cylindrical, succulent foliage in various shades of grayish-green. But the new selections called lemon sedum have yellow to chartreuse foliage.

General Characteristics and Care: The genus name comes from the Latin word *sedeo* meaning to sit, in reference to the habit of many of the sedum species to sit and sprawl over rocks.

Susceptible to flopping, which can be avoided by siting in full sun in soils that are not too moist or rich. Pinching in spring can also force stems to grow thicker and bushier.

Zones: Hardiness Zone: 7a to 9b.

Exposure: Full sun. Tolerates some light shade. Also tolerates drought and heat, particularly once established.

Soil: Easily grown in average, dry to medium, well-drained soils with a pH of alkaline (>8.0) to neutral (6.0-8.0).

Water: It seldom needs watering but will grow in moist soils with good drainage.

Fertilizer: Lemon Coral Sedum grows very slowly and doesn't require added fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Blooms June through August.

Flower Color: Small, yellow, star-shaped flower clusters.

Size: Grows 10-14 inches. Its vigorous growth habit is mounded to stacking and trailing.

Toxicity: Sedum is non-toxic to animals and humans.

Pruning: Spotting signs that it's time to prune is crucial. Look for overgrown sections, dead or damaged stalks, and areas where the plant seems to be flopping over. Deadheading and removing spent blooms or areas of dieback is important. Snip just above a leaf node to encourage a fuller plant and more blooms. For shaping and controlling size, strategic cuts are key. Reduce leggy stems by half in early summer to prevent the Sedum from becoming top-heavy.

Sources: <https://www.gardencrossings.com/product/sedum-lemon-coral-stonecrop/>;
[https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Lemon+coral+sedum+characteristics.](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Lemon+coral+sedum+characteristics.;);
<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/sedum-mexicanum-lemon-coral/>;
<https://greg.app/how-to-prune-sedum-lemon-ball/>.

SELLOUM (Split Leaf Philodendron)
(Thaumatococcus bipinnatifidum)
Araceae



Geographical Origin: South America

Overview: Split-leaf philodendrons are large vines that get their name from their fenestrated (splits or holes in the leaves) leaves thought to be formed to make them hurricane proof in the forests of Hawaii and South and Central America. In the right conditions these plants can get big fast, so make sure you have adequate space to accommodate this beauty.

General Characteristics and Care: Staking up split-leaves will encourage larger leaves and more fenestrations. Typically, the leaves will start to fenestrate on the 5th to 7th leaf on the vine. Staking the plant can also make its size more manageable.

Zones: Grown outdoors in zone 8b and higher.

Exposure: A tropical plant that is usually grown in full sun but can tolerate and adapt to deep shade.

Soil: It grows best in rich, moisture-retentive soil that can be slightly alkaline. However, it cannot tolerate high salt concentration in soil. The ideal pH for a Split Leaf Philodendron swings between 5.5 and 6.5, slightly acidic.

Water: Water when the top 2-2.5" of soil are dry. Split-leaves are pretty drought tolerant. It's safer to err on the side of too wet than dry. If left to dry out too long, brown spots may appear on the edges of the leaves.

Fertilizer: Fertilize split-leaf philodendrons regularly during their growing season with a balanced water-soluble fertilizer that is diluted to 1/4 strength. Fish emulsion also works well.

Bloom Period: A philodendron must be mature before it can begin flowering, which takes a staggering 15 to 16 years. Blooms last 1-2 months, typically from May to July, once a year.

Flower Color: Often a creamy white or off-yellow, and they're not the showiest part of the plant

Size: This plant needs space to grow outwards and upwards as its foliage can grow 8 to 10 feet tall and 6 feet or more wide.

Toxicity: Split-leaf philodendrons are toxic to animals and small children.

Pruning: These plants tend to take up a great deal of room as they mature and need constant pruning to keep them manageable. You can cut off some stems from the existing plant and use them to start new plants.

Sources: [https://lomi.com/blogs/news/philodendron-bipinnatifidum.;](https://lomi.com/blogs/news/philodendron-bipinnatifidum.)
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thaumatococcus_bipinnatifidum.;](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thaumatococcus_bipinnatifidum.) [https://marcumsnursery.com/houseplant-guides/split-leaf-philodendron/;](https://marcumsnursery.com/houseplant-guides/split-leaf-philodendron/) <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=split+leaf+philodendron.>

SHELL GINGER

(*Alpinia zerumbet*)

Zingiberaceae



Geographical Origin: East Asia

Overview: The long leaf blades of *A. zerumbet* are used for wrapping *zongzi*, a traditional Chinese dish made of rice stuffed with different fillings. In Okinawa, Japan, its leaves are sold for making an herbal tea and are also used to flavor noodles and wrap *muchi* rice cakes. The plant's dried fruits are treated as one of the numerous medicinal spice ingredients in a Sichuan hot pot soup base under the name *shārén* (沙仁) in Sichuan Mandarin Chinese.

General Characteristics and Care: Leafy, arching stems create a lush, tropical effect with boldly striped yellow and green foliage. Large, drooping clusters of white and pink shell-like flowers are sweetly fragrant. Works well in containers and can be used as an indoor specimen. An herbaceous perennial. They are grown as ornamentals and their leaves are used in cuisine and traditional medicine.

Zones: Hardiness zones 8-11

Exposure: Full to partial sun

Soil: The best soil for ginger is loose, loamy, and rich in organic matter with a pH of 5.5 to 6.5.

Water: Keep soil surface moist, but not soggy.

Fertilizer: Ginger roots benefit from fertilizer containing high levels of phosphorus (P).

Bloom Period: Spring

Flower Color: The waxy, funnel-shaped flowers are a pearly white tinged with light pink on the outside, but inside are bright yellow with red markings.

Size: Quickly forms foliage clumps 4 to 7 ft. tall, 4 ft. wide.

Toxicity: Although this is just an ornamental ginger, it is non-toxic to both humans and pets.

Pruning: Often it will become top heavy, and lean over onto other plants, or it may simply be taller than you would like. To achieve a shorter, more compact plant, remove the tallest canes at the ground. Cut others to the height desired, by cutting just above a leaf.

Sources: : <https://www.monrovia.com/variegated-shell-ginger.html>;

<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=shell+ginger+blooms#vhid=0p9TheFgZRMEaM&vssid=1>;

<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=shell+ginger+soil+>;<https://dengarden.com/gardening/How-to-Prune-Variiegated-Ginger>

SNAKE PLANT (Mother-in-Law Tongue)
(Draceana trifasciata [Sansevieria trifasciata])
Asparagaceae



Geographical Origin: Tropical areas of Africa and Asia.

Overview: You can expect a snake plant to grow slowly, sending up infrequent leaves from beneath the soil. Watching them spiral as they unfurl is a favorite plant pastime of many gardeners. It makes an ideal houseplant because it is virtually indestructible. The leaves last for years, and the plant becomes denser and more beautiful over time with almost no maintenance. Since snake plants grow from rhizomes, they are easy to divide and replant.

General Characteristics and Care: Snake plants are succulents, so they need to be planted in well-draining soil. This plant thrives on neglect; the only trouble they'll give is if they are watered too frequently or left standing in water. If in low light and watered before they are completely bone dry, they are prone to rot beneath the soil.

Zones: 9-11. These hardy succulents are likely to die in cold lower than 50°F (10°C).

Exposure: Snake plants prefer plentiful sunlight but will tolerate some light shade and continue to grow. They should be protected from the hottest, southern sun in summer, or the leaves will scorch. Though they can survive poor light conditions, they will not flower without good sun exposure.

Soil: These plants like a well-draining, slightly acidic soil with a pH of 5.5-7.5. A sandy cactus mix with some organic material.

Fertilizer: A balanced NPK ratio around 10-10-10 is a good starting point.

Bloom Period: A snake plant can bloom under certain conditions, and usually in the spring. It requires mild, continuous stress, usually when the snake plant becomes root bound.

Flower Color: These plants produce delicate, star-shaped white or cream flowers that exude a subtle, sweet fragrance, particularly noticeable at night. The blooms are grouped on slender, vertical spikes, adding a contrasting softness to the plant's rigid structure.

Size: From 1' to 3' tall.

Toxicity: Snake Plants contain saponins that if ingested may be harmful to humans and pets.

Pruning: Pruning should be kept to one-third of the plant mass or less, and likely only needed every 2-3 years. It's a long game, so patience is key.

Sources: <https://www.floragrubb.com/indoor-house-plants-at-flora-grubb-gardens/2020/11/9/sansevieria-snake-plant-the-friendliest-houseplant/>; <https://florasense.com/blogs/do-snake-plants-bloom-secrets-of-flowering-varieties/>; <https://plantaddicts.com/is-snake-plant-poisonous/>; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=snake+plant+soil+pH>

SNOW BUSH
(*Breynia disticha*)
Phyllanthaceae



Geographical Origin: Tropical Pacific Islands

Overview: This showy plant is also called a Hawaiian Snowbush, Snow-on-the-Mountain, Sweet Pea Bush, Ice Cream Bush, and Foliage Flower. In its native habitat, it is often used in hedges. Cultivars exist with pink and white mottling on the leaves.

General Characteristics and Care: In addition to growing in the ground in warm climates, it can be used in a container as an accent in the garden. It puts out profuse suckers and must be maintained to keep it in a tidy habit. Southern gardeners can try growing this plant outdoors, but northern gardeners will need to grow in containers and move indoors.

Zones: USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 10a, 10b, 11a, 11b

Exposure: This plant craves bright, indirect sunlight. *Breynia disticha* is a bit of a diva when it comes to its environment. It enjoys a warm, humid environment. It is happiest in a temperature range between 60°F and 80°F (15°C – 27°C).

Soil: Neutral pH (6.0-8.0); Prefers light, sandy soils and will not tolerate salt.

Water: Watering your Snow Bush is a delicate dance--too much, and you risk root rot; too little, and the leaves start to droop. It needs a “moist but not soggy” environment.

Fertilizer: The right blend of nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K) is critical, with an emphasis on nitrogen to fuel those eye-catching leaves. Don't skimp on micronutrients either; iron and magnesium are like the secret sauce for your Snowbush's health.

Bloom Period: Indeterminate.

Flower Color: The flowers are mostly inconspicuous due to the striking foliage. The fruits are red berries that are 3/8 inch wide.

Size: It grows to 3' or more, 2-4 feet wide with a rounded to vase shape. It also can be easily pruned into various sizes and shapes.

Toxicity: Snow Bush is toxic to pets. If ingested, it can cause vomiting and diarrhea in cats and dogs.

Pruning: To ensure your Snowbush thrives, prune annually in winter. This timing allows you to control size and encourages healthy new growth. For the best results, remove one to three large canes from the center to improve air circulation. Target older, grayer canes, making your cuts close to the ground to promote rejuvenation.

Sources: Starr_030612-0047_Breynia_disticha.jpg.; <https://36vine.com/blogs/plant-care-guides/snow-bush/>.
<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/breynia-disticha/>; <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=snow+bush+soil+requirements>; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/shrubs/snow-bush/what-is-a-snow-bush.htm>; <https://greg.app/how-to-prune-brenia-snowbush/>.

SPIDER PLANT
(Chlorophytum comosum)
Asparagaceae



Geographical Origin: Coastal areas of South Africa.

Overview: Spider plants are one of the best air-cleaning indoor. In NASA's 1989 Clean Air Study, spider plants outperformed other plants in the experiment. Spider plants have also been proven to remove around 95% of toxins from the air in 24 hours.

General Characteristics and Care: Spider plants resistant plants and thrive on some neglect. When you see a small spider plant (known as a spiderette) hanging from the adult plant, inspect it for tiny roots at the bottom and little knob-like propagates. If it has both, it's ready to propagate.

Zones: Spider plants can be grown outside in zones 9 to 11.

Exposure: They prefer light shade. They thrive in lots of indirect light, between 55- and 80-degrees F.

Soil: Spider plants need well-draining, slightly acidic soil.

Water: When young, they need moist soil. Spider plants are sensitive to the fluoride and chlorine in city water, so they perform best with rainwater or distilled water.

Fertilizer: They don't like too much fertilizer, use a basic 10-10-10 fertilizer only once a month or bi-monthly.

Bloom Period: In their natural habitat, spider plants typically bloom in late spring or early summer. In the spot where each flower dies, a baby spider plant can form along the offshoot. Most spider plants won't flower until they are mature and slightly pot bound.

Flower Color: Small white, star-shaped flowers are produced at the ends of the stems.

Size: A mature spider plant can reach a height of 12-24 inches and a spread of 12-36 inches.

Toxicity: Spider plants contain chemical compounds that are said to be related to opium. While considered non-toxic, these compounds can still result in an upset stomach, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Pruning: For the most part, spider plants do not need pruning. Pluck any completely withered leaves off the plant.

Sources: [https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=spider+plant#imgrc=_1Aiklc68TV6zM&imgdii=hcW6WC5PBcEVEM](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=spider+plant#imgrc=_1Aiklc68TV6zM&imgdii=hcW6WC5PBcEVEM;);
<https://www.rollingnature.com/blogs/news/spider-plant-nasa-approved-natural-air-purifier>;
<https://www.homesandgardens.com/gardens/benefits-of-spider-plants>;
<https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=spider+plant+zones>;
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/houseplants/spider-plant/growing-spider-plant-outside.htm>

STAGHORN FERN (Elkhorn Fern)
(Platycerium bifurcatum)
Polypodiaceae



Geographical Origin: Asia and Australia

Overview: A staghorn fern is an epiphytic plant, which means it grows on other plants or objects for support but is not parasitic. This type of fern is known for its shape that mimics deer or elk antlers. The fern has two distinct leaf forms—small, flat leaves (known as shield fronds) that cover and protect the root ball structure and take up water and nutrients and green, pronged antler fronds that emerge from this base.

General Characteristics and Care: Though young ferns may be started in a moist traditional potting mixture, staghorn ferns should be mounted once they progress toward maturity. If there's one thing to remember, it's that staghorn ferns love humidity. Though more mature staghorn can survive briefly freezing temperatures, they thrive in warm, humid conditions

Zones: It can only be grown in gardens with a very mild climate--zones 9 and above.

Exposure: Staghorn ferns prefer to be kept in a location that offers consistent but shaded light. They can handle more sunlight if given enough water, warmth, and humidity. Just be cautious about allowing any direct rays to hit the fragile fronds, as they can burn easily.

Soil: Epiphytes get moisture and nutrients from the air, rain, water and debris accumulating around them. This is a plant often mounted onto a wooden plank with moss or burlap. Staghorn ferns also grow well in hanging baskets but can become very heavy. Staghorn ferns enjoy acidic soils, with a pH of 6.0-7.0.

Water: Staghorn ferns absorb water through their fronds, as well as their roots. This means that they respond well to misting and appreciate humid spaces.

Fertilizer: Feed your staghorn fern monthly during periods of active growth (spring and summer). Use a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer (ratio of 1:1:1). During periods of dormancy (fall and winter), reduce fertilizing to every other month.

Bloom Period: The Staghorn Fern is a non-flowering perennial.

Size: A mature *P. bifurcatum* can grow as big as 3 feet across.

Toxicity: Staghorn ferns are non-toxic to humans and animals.

Pruning: Staghorn ferns are not pruned but dead or damaged leaves should be cut away for best appearance of the plant.

Sources: <https://gardenerspath.com/plants/foilage/grow-staghorn-fern/>
<https://www.planetnatural.com/staghorn-fern/>; <https://www.thespruce.com/grow-platycerium-species-1902725>.
[https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=staghorn+fern+zone](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=staghorn+fern+zone;);
<https://pistilsnursery.com/blogs/journal/staghorn-fern-care>

STROMANTHE
(*Stromanthe sanguinea* ‘Triostar’)
Marantaceae



Geographical Origin: Brazilian rainforest

Overview: It is a common houseplant in temperate climates, valued for its striking variegated leaves with purple undersides. Along with its vibrant leaves, you will love watching the leaves of the Stromanthe move towards the light—literally reaching for the stars as the light fades.

General Characteristics and Care: This eye-catching family of tropical plants is known for its impressive, colorful, foliage.

Zones: Winter hardy to USDA zones 10-12. North of Zone 10, plants should be grown indoors as houseplants or in greenhouses. In southern zones, outdoor plants can be covered when there is a threat of frost, and although the leaves may be frostbitten, the plant normally will recover.

Exposure: Performs well with morning sun and afternoon shade. Foliage will usually burn in direct sun, particularly in hot summer months. Houseplants may be taken outdoors to protected locations in summer in part sun to nearly full shade.

Soil: The Stromanthe is best grown in fertile, moist but well-drained soils. Your Stromanthe needs a soil that is well-draining, breathable, and light. pH requirement is not too particular, but generally between 6.0 and 8.0.

Water: The soil should be kept moist at all times, but never waterlogged as the plant is susceptible to root rot.

Fertilizer: They are light feeders, but that doesn't mean no food at all! A balanced NPK fertilizer that provides all 12 essential minerals is appropriate.

Bloom Period: Blooms March to April.

Flower Color: Tiny white flowers (to 1/2” long) with orange-red sepals and showy cherry-red bracts bloom in panicles (to 2-3” across).

Size: At a mature size the Stromanthe can get to 3 to 5 feet tall and spread from 2 to 3 feet across.

Toxicity: Stromanthe are pet safe and non toxic to animals and humans.

Pruning: Usually this plant does not require pruning other than dead leaves cluttering up the plant.

Sources: <https://gardenerspath.com/plants/houseplants/grow-stromanthe-triostar/>;
<https://bloomscape.com/plant-care-guide/stromanthe/>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stromanthe_sanguinea;
<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=282665&isprofile=0&bt=4>; <https://www.thespruce.com/triostar-stromanthe-plant-profile-5069126>;
<https://www.lovethatleaf.co.nz/blogs/plant-care-guides/stromanthe-triostar-care>

SWAMP FERN
(*Blechnum serrulatum*)
Blechnaceae



Geographical Origin: Florida from the Panhandle south to Miami-Dade County and the Monroe County mainland; West Indies, Mexico, Central America and South America.

Overview: Swamp Fern is a common native to the swamps, marshes and wetlands of Florida. The Aboriginal people of Australia used the Swamp Fern and other *Blechnum* species as a bush food by harvesting the roots and eating them raw or roasted.

General Characteristics and Care: Primarily recommended for natural landscapes and habitat restorations. Also useful as an accent groundcover along pond and lake edges and other moist to wet sites

Zones: USDA Hardiness Zone 4 (–30°F) to Zone 8 (10°F), and some will withstand the extremes of Zone 2 (–50°F) and Zone 10 (30°F).

Exposure: Light shade to moderate shade or full sun.

Soil: Wet to moist, poorly drained sandy soils to moderately well-drained organic soils. Best with a pH below 7.

Water: This is a wetland plant and so requires very moist soils.

Fertilizer: Ferns are relatively light feeders compared to many other foliage plants. They prefer a balanced fertilizer, such as 20-10-20 or 20-20-20, with micronutrients applied at approximately 200 ppm nitrogen. Too much nitrogen can cause tip burn on the roots and leaves if the plant becomes dry.

Bloom Period: None

Flower Color: None

Size: Typically, 2-4 feet in height. Spreading from underground stems (rhizomes) and forming large, sometimes very dense, patches

Toxicity: *Blechnum* is a genus of ferns that are not known to be poisonous to humans or pets.

Pruning: Dried and damaged fronds should be removed from the base to improve attractiveness.

Sources: <https://exploreorca.com/2017/11/05/swamp-fern-has-a-new-name/>; <https://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/plant-directory/blechnum-serrulatum/>; [https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=swamp+fern](https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=swamp+fern;); <https://regionalconservation.org/beta/nfyn/plantdetail.asp?tx=Blecserr>. https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&sca_esv=cd8754e195853826&sca_upv=1&q=swamp+fern+fertilizer+recommendations&spell=1&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwieisqyoYGHAXU2RjABHWquCiYQBSgAegQICRAB&biw=1432&bih=741&dpr=2

SWEET POTATO VINE

(*Ipomoea batatas*)

Convolvulaceae



Geographical Origin: Central and South America

Overview: Sweet Potato is a vigorous-growing, annual ground cover or vine in the Convolvulaceae (morning glory) family and native to Mexico.

General Characteristics and Care: Sweet potato vine (*Ipomoea batatas*), named for its edible cousin, is an ornamental warm-season annual grown for its attractive leaves and vining habit.

Zones: Grown as an annual in zones up to USDA hardiness Zone 9, they grow rapidly and spread quickly. Can be grown as a perennial in Zone 11.

Exposure: The plant does not tolerate frost. It grows best at an average temperature of 24 °C (75° F), with abundant sunshine and warm nights. The Sweet Potato plant does best with at least 6 hours of full sun, but they can take some shade.

Soil: Sweet Potatoes are grown on a variety of soils, but well-drained, light- and medium-textured soils with a pH range of 4.5–7.0 are more favorable for the plant. They can be grown in poor soils with little fertilizer. However, sweet potatoes are very sensitive to aluminum toxicity and will die about six weeks after planting if lime is not applied at planting in this type of soil.

Water: It is not tolerant to waterlogging, which may cause tuber rots and reduce the growth of storage roots if aeration is poor. Keep plants moderately moist, watering once a week, or more during hot spells. Don't overwater or allow plants to dry out.

Fertilizer: Apply a slow-release fertilizer at the time of planting, or use a water-soluble fertilizer monthly. They can be grown in poor soils with little fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Flowers are insignificant, with little to no bloom during summer. It produces flowers when the day is short.

Flower Color: The 4 to 7 cm (1½ to 2¾ in.) long, overgrown and funnel-shaped, folded crown, with a shorter hem, can be lavender to purple-lavender in color, the throat is usually darker in color, but white crowns can also appear.

Size: It can grow 3 to 5 feet in width and 12 inches in height. If grown as a vine, it needs training, but when grown as a ground cover, it spreads quickly by runners. It can be invasive.

Toxicity: Tubers are edible but not meant for consumption. Leaves contain the same principal ingredient as LSD, and can be highly toxic to pets if ingested.

Pruning: In ideal conditions, they can quickly outgrow a space. Lightly prune or shape as needed.

Sources: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/ipomoea-batatas/>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweet_potato;
<https://www.gardendesign.com/vines/sweet-potato-vine.html>

TIBOUCHINA 'JULES DWARF' (Princess Flower)

(*Tibouchina* spp.)

Melastomataceae



Geographical Origin: Brazil

Overview: A spectacular sight when in full bloom, Tibouchina, or Princess Flower, is a large, sprawling, tropical, evergreen shrub or small tree with lush foliage of elliptic, softly hairy leaves.

General Characteristics and Care: Versatile, Tibouchina can be trained as a standard or espaliered (training a tree or shrub to grow flat against a wall) plant. Against a west-facing wall receiving at least five hours of full sun. it can also be trained on a trellis or arbor as a vine. Great for containers, as a houseplant, and in mediterranean gardens.

Zones: It can be grown outdoors in frost-free areas. In colder areas, this plant should be grown in containers and brought indoors for overwintering before the first fall frost. In zone 8, this plant is root hardy and will typically die to the ground in winter but will return each spring. Hardiness zones 9 through 11.

Exposure: Full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day) to Partial Shade (Direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours)

Soil: Princess Flower is best grown in moist, fertile (high organic matter), well-drained soils. Soil pH should be less than 6, acidic.

Water: The soil should be kept moist but not soggy, well-draining.

Fertilizer: Fertilize in March, June, and October with well balanced, time-released granular fertilizer that contains minor elements. Do not skip fertilizations as plants will quickly become chlorotic (i.e. yellow).

Bloom Period: In tropical areas, princess flower will bloom sporadically throughout the year. This evergreen shrub blooms on the previous or current year's growth. It will continue blooming from spring through summer.

Flower Color: Lots of deep, rich, royal purple colored flowers.

Size: Moderate growing; as a tree, may reach 12 to 15 ft. tall, 5 to 6 ft. wide

Toxicity: Nontoxic to humans, dogs and cats.

Pruning: Prune lightly, removing unsightly shoots as required. Pinching new growth helps increase branching and will enhance the floral display. Do not prune before summer flowering. Wait for this plant to finish flowering before tipping back by hand pruning.

Sources: <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/tibouchina-urvilleana>;
<https://www.cotswoldgardenflowers.co.uk/encyclopedia/tibouchina-urvilleana-rich-blue-sun/>;
<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/tibouchina-urvilleana/>; <https://www.monrovia.com/princess-flower.html>;
<https://www.hs2g.net/post/tibouchina-urvilleana-princess-flower>

VERBENA (Vervain)
(Verbena officinalis)
Verbenaceae



Geographical Origin: Europe, including Britain, from Denmark south and east to N. Africa, W. Asia to the Himalayas.

Overview: Ancient cultures throughout Europe and the Middle East held Vervain in very high esteem. Its use for medicinal, ceremonial, and religious purposes goes back thousands of years. The ancient Egyptians, Persians, Druids, Greeks, and Romans regarded it as sacred.

General Characteristics and Care: Vervain is a prolific self-seeder; cut back plants before they go to seed if you don't want this to become an issue. Leaves and flowers are used fresh or dried for medicine. Plants will regrow if cut close to the ground.

Zones: USDA hardiness zones include 4 through 8.

Exposure: Full sun, but the plant tolerates partial shade. It cannot grow in full shade.

Soil: The plant needs light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils and prefers well-drained soil. Needs mildly acid, neutral and basic (mildly alkaline) soils.

Water: Relatively drought-tolerant but benefits from occasional irrigation during hot, dry periods. It prefers moist soil.

Fertilizer: Verbenas are not heavy feeders, but they appreciate a monthly application of balanced, slow-release flower fertilizer to help them keep up the flower show, which can last from spring until frost.

Bloom Period: Verbenas typically bloom from May to October.

Flower Color: Pale lilac or white flowers appear on tall delicate stalks.

Size: The mature size of the *officinalis* is 9–12 in. tall and about 12–18 in. wide.

Toxicity: High doses of verbenalin can cause nervous system paralysis resulting in stupor and convulsion. Allopathic medicine for high blood pressure can be effected by vervain. Uterus stimulation possible - avoid during pregnancy. Avoid if breast feeding. If allergies or fits use with caution. Generally Verbena is safe for humans and pets but some verbena species are toxic to animals.

Pruning: To deadhead verbena, wait until the first set of flowers fades. Trim back the top quarter of the plant using clean gardening shears or pruners, lopping off the upper section.

Sources: <https://www.gardenersworld.com/plants/verbena-officinalis-var-grandiflora/>;
<https://pfaf.org/user/Plant.aspx?LatinName=Verbena+officinalis>;
<https://www.saltspringseeds.com/products/vervain-verbena-officinalis-1>; <https://thegrowers-exchange.com/products/vervain>; <https://www.thespruce.com/verbena-care-1315718>;

VERONICA (Speedwell) 'Moodyblues'
(Veronica officinalis)
Plantaginaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Europe and western Asia.

Overview: It is important in European traditional medicine, with uses ranging from internal (as a cough remedy and tonic), to external (as a salve). The slightly bitter and astringent taste and tea-like smell of Speedwell led to its use as a tea substitute in 19th-century France, where it was called *thé d'Europe*, or "Europe tea". The French still use this term as a name for Speedwell.

General Characteristics and Care: It is a herbaceous perennial with hairy green stems that cover the ground in mats and send up short vertical shoots that bear soft violet flowers.

Zones: Moodyblues can be found in Hardiness zones 3 through 7

Exposure: It can grow in semi-shade (light woodland) or no shade.

Soil: light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils and prefers well-drained soil. Prefers mildly acid, neutral, and basic (mildly alkaline) soils.

Water: It prefers dry or moist soil.

Fertilizer: The *officinalis* prefers a soil that is loose and fresh, without too much organic matter. Therefore, there is no need for foundational fertilization.

Bloom Period: Veronica's flowering is very abundant and occurs at the axil of the stems' last leaves, in a spike inflorescence, between May and July.

Flower Color: The Veronica flowers have four irregular petals of a bluish color, with darker, almost violet veins.

Size: Veronica is a small perennial plant that generally does not exceed 23 inches in height but is on average 4 to 12 inches in height.

Toxicity: The Veronica genus of plants includes over 500 varieties, with the majority of those being edible or at the very least non-toxic to humans. According to the ASPCA, this plant is also considered to be non-toxic for cats, dogs, and livestock.

Pruning: In cultivating the *Veronica officinalis* plant, pruning is not necessary. All that's required is to trim the flowers once they have finished blooming, usually at the beginning of autumn. This keeps the plant cleaner and more vigorous.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Veronica_officinalis;
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[https://plantaddicts.com/are-speedwell-poisonous/#:~:text=The%20Veronica%20genus%20of%20plants,for%20cats%2C%20dogs%20and%20livestock.](https://plantaddicts.com/are-speedwell-poisonous/#:~:text=The%20Veronica%20genus%20of%20plants,for%20cats%2C%20dogs%20and%20livestock.;);

VINCA/MADAGASCAR PERIWINKLE
(*Catharanthus roseus*)
Apocynaceae



Geographical Origin: Madagascar.

Overview: The Periwinkle was formerly included in the genus *Vinca* as *Vinca rosea*. Madagascar Periwinkle is an evergreen, erect-to-spreading, herbaceous, tender perennial that is usually planted as an annual, as it is not cold-hardy.

General Characteristics and Care: It is utilized as a ground cover in beds and for bedding and borders in drought-tolerant gardens, butterfly gardens, and recreational play areas. It may also be grown in a container.

Zones: Usually found within zones 10-11.

Exposure: The Periwinkle should be planted in full sun to partial or dappled shade.

Soil: This plant thrives in well-draining soil that is rich in organic matter. It can tolerate a range of soil types as long as the soil is not compacted and drains well. Ideally, the soil should have a pH level of 6 to 7. Before planting, it is recommended to amend the soil with compost or well-rotted manure to improve its fertility and drainage.

Water: Keep the soil consistently moist but not waterlogged. Water deeply once a week or more often during hot, dry weather.

Fertilizer: Apply a balanced fertilizer every two to three weeks during the growing season to promote healthy growth and blooming.

Bloom Period: It blooms all summer from July through September, only stopping at frost. This plant blooms even during heat stress.

Flower Color: The plant produces an abundance of small, star-shaped flowers in various shades of pink, rose, red, white, and bi-colored patterns.

Size: The plant generally grows to a height of 6-18 inches (15-45 cm) and spreads 6-18 inches (15-45 cm) wide.

Toxicity: *C. roseus* can be extremely toxic if consumed orally by humans, and is cited (under its synonym *Vinca rosea*) in the Louisiana State Act 159. All parts of the plant are poisonous. The Periwinkle is also toxic to pets and generally resistant to deer and rabbits due to its toxicity. Despite the Vincas' extreme toxicity, it is used in chemotherapy medications.

Pruning: Prune the plant to control its size and shape if necessary..

Sources: <https://swbiodiversity.org/seinet/taxa/index.php?taxon=31301&clid=4502>;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catharanthus_roseus; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/catharanthus-roseus/>;
<https://www.gardenia.net/plant/catharanthus-roseus-periwinkle-vinca>;

YELLOW ALDER (BUTTERCUP)

(*Turnera ulmifolia*)

Passifloraceae



Geographical Origin: Mexico and West Indies

Overview: A recent study found that yellow alder potentiated the antibiotic activity against methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA- Staph Infections). In traditional medicine in South America and the West Indies, a tea made from the leaves of this species is used to treat gastrointestinal problems (constipation, diarrhea), colds and flu, vascular diseases (heart palpitations), menstrual cramps, and dermatological issues. Another common name used for this plant is Ramgoat dashalong due to an inference that it increases the sexual libido of goats when they eat the foliage.

General Characteristics and Care: These plants can survive on minimum water and grow on walls, cement blocks, and rocks. Tawny Coster (*Acraea terpsicore*) butterfly larvae feed on these plants. This plant is commonly misidentified with the closely related *T. diffusa* in horticultural commerce, causing it to be often misrepresented as "Damiana."

Zones: USDA Zones 9 through 11

Exposure: The Yellow Alder prefers to grow in part shade/part sun

Soil: Most productive in rich, well-drained soil. The Yellow Alder is very adaptable – tolerates a range of soil types and pH.

Water: Water thoroughly, but let the soil air out a little bit in between applications.

Fertilizer: The leaves stay dark green with little or no fertilizer. For the best display, fertilize frequently.

Bloom Period: *T. Ulmifolia* is grown as an ornamental plant for its showy yellow flowers, which bloom from July to September. The life span for the flower is around six hours in the morning.

Flower Color: The flowers are bright yellow with five round petals with a strong contrasting green leaf.

Size: The *Turnera ulmifolia* can grow up to 2 to 3 feet tall and wide.

Toxicity: Parts of this plant can be poisonous if ingested in large quantities, such as the leaves. Make sure to keep an eye on children and pets around this plant.

Pruning: It can grow aggressively and may become weedy, so it may require cutting.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turnera_ulmifolia; <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/FP593>; <https://housing.com/news/turnera-ulmifolia-facts-growth-maintenance-and-uses-of-yellow-alder/>; <https://www.pslbg.org/yellow-alder.html>; <https://homegrownlandscapes.wordpress.com/2015/09/03/whats-up-buttercup-turnera-ulmifolia/>; <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/yard-garden/resource-library/plant-week/buttercup-brazilian-10-08-10.aspx>

YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

(*Brunfelsia pauciflora*)

Solanaceae



Geographical Origin: Brazil

Overview: *Brunfelsia pauciflora* is a bushy evergreen shrub noted for the transformation of its rich purple flowers to lilac and finally to white as they age--hence its name.

General Characteristics and Care: A great container subject, Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow can be used as a screen or hedge, in beds and borders, or as a specimen plant.

Zones: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow plant care is easy when the shrub is grown in warm, nearly frost-free climates of USDA plant hardiness zones 9 through 12. In cooler climates, grow the shrub in a container and bring it indoors once frost threatens.

Exposure: Prefers full sun (6 or more hours of direct sunlight a day) and partial shade (direct sunlight only part of the day, 2-6 hours).

Soil: They prefer moist fertile acidic soils but aren't very demanding about soil type, although the planting location should be well-draining.

Water: Water the shrub during dry spells to keep the soil from completely drying out

Fertilizer: Fertilize once a year in spring.

Bloom Period: Heaviest blooming is in spring and fall but it may repeat bloom anytime during the year under favorable conditions.

Flower Color: The Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow plant is a perennial shrub in the nightshade family and gets its name from the ever-changing color of its blooms that go from deep purple to lavender, to white as they mature.

Size: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow shrubs grow 7 to 10 feet (2-3 m.) tall with a spread of up to 12 feet (4 m.).

Toxicity: The roots of several species corresponding to the genus *Brunfelsia* contain substances whose consumption can cause problems in human health according to the compendium published by the European Food Safety Authority in 2012. They are toxic to humans, cats, dogs and horses and resistant to deer.

Pruning: Prune to encourage more blooms as they occur on new growth.

Sources: <https://www.budgetplants.com/shrubs/background/yesterday-today-and-tomorrow-brunfelsia-pauciflora>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brunfelsia_pauciflora; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/brunfelsia-pauciflora/>; <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/shrubs/yesterday-today-tomorrow/yesterday-today-tomorrow-plant.htm>; <https://www.gardenia.net/plant/brunfelsia-pauciflora>

Zinnia
(*Zinnia spp.*)
Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: Southwestern United States to South America

Overview: Zinnias are annuals, shrubs, and sub-shrubs native primarily to North America, with a few species in South America. The Zinnia plant was brought up on the International Space Station for an experiment, which demonstrated the capability of zinnias to grow and blossom in a weightless environment.

General Characteristics and Care: Most species have upright stems but some have a lax habit with spreading stems that mound over the surface of the ground.

Zones: Zinnias can withstand a large range of zones all the way from Zone 3 to Zone 10.

Exposure: Prefer full sun (at least six hours a day).

Soil: Zinnias prefer to start off in nutrient-rich soil, and it's critical that the soil is well-draining. These plants are not choosy about pH level.

Water: Because they originated in arid regions, they love hot weather and are drought tolerant but should be watered regularly.

Fertilizer: Plantings should be fertilized at least twice during the growing season using a balanced granular or water soluble 20-20-20 fertilizer or a slow release fertilizer at the time of planting.

Bloom Period: Zinnias begin flowering in late spring or early summer, typically June or July, depending on where you live, and they will continue to bloom into fall and until the first frost.

Flower Color: The flowers have a range of appearances, from a single row of petals to a dome shape, similar to a chrysanthemum. Zinnias may be white, chartreuse, yellow, orange, red, purple, or lilac.

Size: Zinnias come in a large range of sizes—from 8 inches to 4 feet tall.

Toxicity: This species is non-toxic to humans, dogs, cats, and horses.

Pruning: Zinnias benefit from deadheading to encourage further blooming.

Sources: <https://www.terramatgardens.com/products/zinnia-cut-come-again-mix>;
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zinnia>; <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/zinnia/>;
<https://extension.psu.edu/zinnias-for-the-home-garden>; <https://www.thespruce.com/zinnias-a-burst-of-hot-flower-colors-from-zinnias-1402919>

Burnett Honors College Meditation Garden

Master Plant List

Addendum

June 30, 2024-

Common Name	Scientific Name
1. Balloon Flower	<i>Platycodon grandifloras</i> "Twinkle White"
2. Crossandra	<i>Crossandra infundibuliformis</i>
3. Ginger 'Siam Tulip Splash'	<i>Curcuma alismatifolia</i>
4. Mexican Heather	<i>Cuphea hyssopifolia</i> 'Florigloria'
5. Salvia 'Mysty'	<i>Salvia longispicata x fariniceae</i>
6. Spurflower	<i>Plectranthus</i> spp. 'Magic Mona'
7. Podocarpus	<i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i>
8. Gaillardia 'Copper Sun'	<i>Gaillardia aristata</i>
9. Bromeliaceae	Various
10. Daisy 'Dahlberg'	<i>Thymophylla tenuiloba</i>
11.	

BALLOON FLOWER 'Twinkle White'

(*Platycodon grandiflorus*)

Campanulaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to East Asia (China, Korea, Japan).

Overview: It has the prestigious Royal Horticultural Society Award of Garden Merit (AGM). It also makes a good cut flower. A notable feature of the plant is the flower bud, which swells like a balloon before fully opening. The five petals are fused together into a bell shape at the base, like its relatives, the campanulas.

General Characteristics and Care: *Platycodon grandiflorus* is a perennial plant which is commonly grown in mountains and fields. In Korea, the plant as well as its root are one of the most frequent ingredients in *bibimbap*. Sometimes, rice is cooked with balloon flower root to make *doraji-bap*. Preparation of the root always involves soaking and washing (usually rubbing it with coarse sea salt and rinsing it multiple times), which gets rid of the bitter taste. The extracts and purified platycoside compounds (saponins) from the roots of *Platycodon grandiflorum* may exhibit neuroprotective, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer, anti-allergy, improved insulin resistance, and cholesterol-lowering properties.¹

Zones: This plant is hardy down to -40°C (-40°F) and can be cultivated in USDA zones 3A to 9b.

Exposure: It will thrive in sun or partial shade.

Soil: Grow *Platycodon* in fertile soil that's moist but well-drained. Avoid growing it in heavy, waterlogged soil.

Water: Water regularly, about an inch per week, during the plant's first year in your garden.

Fertilizer: Feed with an all-purpose feed in spring, and mulch in autumn.

Bloom Period: Summer.

Flower Color: Flowers are mostly in shades of vivid violet-blue, although white and pink cultivars are also available.

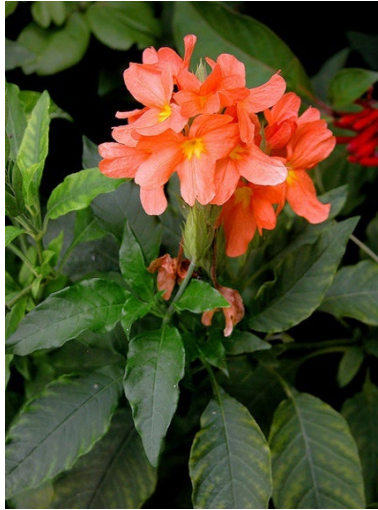
Size: Grows to 60 cm (24 in) tall by 30 cm (12 in) wide.

Toxicity: Balloon plant exudes a milky white latex that is toxic if ingested. Plants and roots can safely ingested if properly prepared.

Pruning: Deadhead the faded flowers to keep the plant blooming well. Cut back the flowered stems in autumn. *Platycodons* suffer when their roots are disturbed, so it's best not to divide or move your plants once established.

Sources: <https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to-grow-plants/how-to-grow-platycodon-balloon-flower/>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platycodon>;

CROSSANDRA (Firecracker Flower)
(Crossandra infundibuliformis)
Acanthaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to India and Sri Lanka.

Overview: In tropical conditions, this plant can be grown outdoors, and it remains evergreen, while in temperate regions it is mostly cultivated as a houseplant or an outdoor annual. The common name "Firecracker Flower" refers to the seed pods, which are found after the flower has dried up, and tend to "explode" when near high humidity or rainfall. It is related to the Mexican petunia and the yellow shrimp plant.

General Characteristics and Care: They need bright indirect light, warm air temperatures, and high humidity to perform well. Heavy rainfall can damage the flowers. Crossandra needs proper sunlight and temperature requirements met to thrive. If growing in a dry climate, leaves can fall off after turning brown from underwatering. This plant is propagated by stem cuttings and should be started in the spring for best results.

Zones: USDA Zones 9-11. Cooler temperatures below 55 F can cause the plant to lose its leaves.

Exposure: Crossandra thrives in partial sunlight for at least four hours daily when growing outside. Dappled sunlight, or sunlight streaming through a tree's canopy, can help shield the plant from the harsh afternoon heat.

Soil: Loamy, well-drained; Acidic (5.8 to 6.5).

Water: Water Crossandra when the soil is dry—use your hands to feel the top few inches.

Fertilizer: Feed every three weeks with a liquid fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Its near-continuous blooming sends out spear-shaped flower spikes.

Flower Color: Coral, peach, orange, salmon, and even yellow blossoms.

Size: It grows about 2 feet tall and wide indoors and outdoors.

Toxicity: Firecracker Flower is toxic to humans. Firecracker Flower's beauty hides risks; it is toxic due to alkaloids and glycosides. This plant is considered non-toxic to cats and dogs.

Pruning: Prune Crossandra in the spring before the new growing season to promote a healthy plant. Remove damaged stems to make room for new stems or use cuttings for propagating new plants. Deadhead spent flowers to encourage more blooms.

Sources: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/crossandra-infundibuliformis/>; <https://www.southernliving.com/garden/shade/crossandra-firecracker-plant/>; <https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/crossandra/>;

GINGER ‘Siam Tulip Splash’
(Curcuma alismatifolia)
Zingiberaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to northern Thailand and Cambodia.

Overview: Despite its name, it is not related to the tulip but is a close relative of Turmeric. Cultivating Siam adds large, showy, tropical flowers and delicate bracts to the outdoor flower bed. In lower zones, this tropical beauty easily grows indoors as a houseplant. *Curcuma alismatifolia* is also known as Curcuma or Summer Tulip.

General Characteristics and Care: Siam tulip care is modest. This long-lived perennial has a moderate salt tolerance and is a good choice for a seaside garden. Once a rare tropical plant, *Curcuma alismatifolia* is gaining in popularity and is now available from online nurseries in spring and summer. You may find it at your local garden center if you live in a tropical region.

Zones: USDA zones 9 to 11.

Exposure: Many of these species have broad green leaves and appreciate a semi-shaded location. They also grow well in pots in the shade house.

Soil: Siam Splash Tulip does best in well-draining soil. A good soil will contain lots of organic matter such as coco coir as well as perlite or vermiculite to help with drainage. Siam tulip prefers slightly acidic soil with a pH range between 5.5 and 6.5 for optimal growth.

Water: Siam Splash Tulip prefers for the soil to dry out between waterings and should be watered regularly.

Fertilizer: Feed monthly with a 10-20-10 liquid fertilizer diluted by half while plant is growing and flowering.

Bloom Period: The plant has an upright habit and blooms on a scape rising above the foliage. Blossoms of the Siam tulip appear in late spring through fall, depending on the variety you've planted.

Flower Color: These blooms range in shades of pink, red, rose, and even brown. Tiny flowers also appear from the lower bracts, adding extra color to the Siam tulip plant.

Size: Reaches 3 feet (1 m.) in height. Some sources on curcuma call it a shrub.

Toxicity: Siam Tulip is non-toxic, but not for eating.

Pruning: Deadhead and trim leaves to promote health and new growth.

Sources: [https://gingerwoodnursery.com/product-category/gingers/curcuma-gingers/tulip-gingers-siam-tulips.;](https://gingerwoodnursery.com/product-category/gingers/curcuma-gingers/tulip-gingers-siam-tulips;)
<https://greg.app/plant-care/curcuma-siam-splash-siam-tulip.;>
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/bulbs/siam-tulip/growing-siam-tulips.htm.;>

MEXICAN HEATHER
(Cuphea hyssopifolia 'Floriglora')
Lythraceae



Geographical Origin: Native to Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Overview: Prized for its lacy foliage and numerous jewel-like flowers, *cuphea*, commonly called Mexican Heather, makes an ideal container or border plant. The Latin specific epithet *hyssopifolia* (which also occurs in several other plant names, including that of *Bassia hyssopifolia*) means "hyssop-leaved", referring to the fine, narrow leaves of that plant. This plant has gained the Royal Horticultural Society's Award of Garden Merit.

General Characteristics and Care: An ornamental plant grown in orchards and gardens, it grows on the banks of streams, associated with disturbed vegetation of tropical deciduous and sub-deciduous forests, as well as mountain mesophilic forest. The species is naturalized in Hawaii and regarded as a serious weed there.

Zones: It can be cultivated outdoors in USDA hardiness zones 8B-11 but does not tolerate freezing temperatures.

Exposure: Plant Mexican heather in a sunny or partially sunny spot.

Soil: It will tolerate any soil type, although good drainage is essential. Adding compost or manure to the soil will provide additional nutrients, boosting the plant's strength. Slightly acidic soil is best with a low pH between 5.5 and 7.

Water: Mexican heather likes to be watered whenever the surface of the soil feels dry to the touch.

Fertilizer: Phosphorus-rich fertilizers boost Mexican-Heather blooms; check the label's middle number. Early spring fertilization aligns with growth spurts.

Bloom Period: This shrubby, tropical annual is smothered in blooms all summer long.

Flower Color: The flowers are as attractive to butterflies as they are to people. Colors include white, violet, or red.

Size: Grows just 10 to 18 inches tall and can spread to about 35 inches.

Toxicity: Mexican Heather is non-toxic, safe for humans and pets.

Pruning: Mexican Heather plants don't require pruning to stay healthy, but occasional pruning can help remove old growth and encourage the plant to stay bushy. If you notice your plants adopting thin or leggy growth habits, trim back the branches with sharp gardening shears.

Sources: <https://costafarms.com/blogs/plant-finder/mexican-heather?srsId=AfmBOoq8ykhMxB-DvHWWxThdyDmB-0FESb5oAk3nzIxafDxn2jEG6iN.>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuphea_hyssopifolia.;

SALVIA 'Mysty'
(Salvia longispicata x fariniceae)
Lamiaceae



Geographical Origin: The genus is distributed throughout the Old World and the Americas (over 900 total species), with three distinct regions of diversity: Central America and South America (approximately 600 species); Central Asia and the Mediterranean (250 species); Eastern Asia (90 species).

Overview: An outstanding annual for heat-tolerant gardens, this compact plant produces an abundance of large flower spikes. Wonderful in a container, garden bed, or as a cut flower. Herbaceous perennial in mild winter regions; grow as an annual elsewhere. Naturally more compact than Mystic Spires Blue, with a full appearance. It is perfect for landscapes and mixed combos.

General Characteristics and Care: The genus *Salvia*, or Sage, is a huge group of ornamental annuals and perennials that are found growing in the wild across the globe. Old-World species are essential nectar sources for honeybees and bumblebees, while North American native species are commonly pollinated by hummingbirds and bumblebees.

Zones: USDA Hardiness Zones: 7a to 10b.

Exposure: Full sun.

Soil: Salvias grow and flower best in a moderately acid to slightly acid soil ranging between 5.5 to 6.5 on the pH scale. Some prefer a consistently moist soil while others don't mind a drier soil.

Water: Allow soil to dry between waterings.

Fertilizer: Avoid high nitrogen fertilizers that will inhibit blooming.

Bloom Period: Summer through fall.

Flower Color: This *Salvia* is covered with true blue flowers.

Size: Moderate growing; reaches 12 to 18 in. tall and wide.

Toxicity: *Salvia* is considered non-toxic to toddlers, children and adults alike. Many ornamental varieties may not taste too pleasing, however there are no known toxic qualities when consumed by humans. In fact, there are several edible varieties that are used in everyday seasonings.

Pruning: Tip pruning helps to create more compact growth; this can be done at any time after planting. Most Salvias can be pruned back by 1/3 after flowering, removing spent flowering stems as they finish which can result in a second flush of flowers.

Sources: <https://www.monrovia.com/mysty-Salvia.html?srsId=AfmBOoq-l05dbKc3rV-QO9MtshK-G4S29GjZwN4xKrWIEsVaEqQGS5t.>; <https://www.ballseed.com/PlantInfo/?phid=054900001037372>;
<https://www.highcountrygardens.com/content/gardening/how-to-grow-Salvia-sage.>;
<https://www.wilsonbrosgardens.com/how-to-plant-perennial-Salvia.html.>;

SPURFLOWER
(Plectranthus spp. 'Magic Mona')
Lamiaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to southern and tropical Africa and Madagascar.

Overview: *Plectranthus* is a large genus of about 85 species of plants. *Plectranthus* are in the same family as mint (Lamiaceae). Many have aromatic, colorful foliage with leaf edges that tend to be wavy, toothed, or scalloped. Just brush it gently or splash water onto leaves, and the odor is released. That odor is what helps repel mosquitoes—and a host of other insects. This plant goes by many names, including Madagascar Spur Flower, Swedish Ivy and Mintleaf.

General Characteristics and Care: It is widely used in folk medicine to treat conditions like cold, asthma, constipation, headache, cough, fever and skin diseases. The leaves of the plant are often eaten raw or used as flavoring agents or incorporated as ingredients in the preparation of traditional food.

Zones: USDA 8 to 11.

Exposure: Full sun, part shade.

Soil: Grow in moderately fertile, well-drained soil; loam, sand, acid, alkaline, neutral pH.

Water: *Plectranthus* require regular watering to thrive, on average about 1 inch of water per week. Only water once the top inch or two of soil has dried out. Be careful not to overwater.

Fertilizer: In the garden, an organic top dressing is appreciated, as is a monthly application of 10-20-10 fertilizer during the growing season.

Bloom Period: Spring, winter, fall.

Flower Color: Purple, pink, white, blue.

Size: Height: 3 feet; spread: 3 feet.

Toxicity: Non-toxic to humans and pets.

Pruning: Some *Plectranthus* species are considered invasive. Species in the *Plectranthus* genus can be pruned regularly to help them maintain an attractive shape. Shrubby varieties look best when cut back and shaped into more dense bushes. Pruning and deadheading faded flower spikes will likely encourage more blooms.

Sources: <https://www.urbanjungle.uk.com/product/plectranthus-zuluensis/>; <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plectranthus>.; <https://www.thespruce.com/plectranthus-plant-profile-4797062>.;

PODOCARPUS
(Podocarpus macrophyllus)
Podocarpaceae



Geographical Origin: Native to mountainous areas of China and Japan.

Overview: *Podocarpus macrophyllus*, commonly known as the Japanese Yew Pine, Buddhist Pine, or Fern Pine, features dense and lush, dark green leaves held on slender stems. This evergreen grows with a somewhat narrow and rounded habit. Podocarpus makes for a lovely specimen and is also well suited to being trimmed into a hedge, used for screening and shelter, planted to soften a bland wall, or included in a mixed planting.

General Characteristics and Care: Worldwide, there are over one-hundred species of Podocarpus. Locally, there are several Podocarpus species and cultivars to choose from offering different looks and uses. For instance, *Podocarpus macrophyllus* ‘Pringles’ is a naturally dwarf type which grows from three to five feet tall at maturity. This dwarf characteristic reduces the need for pruning and is a natural for a short hedge.

Zones: USDA hardiness zones: 8B through 11.

Exposure: Showing best growth and form in full sun, Podocarpus will grow more slowly and have a looser appearance when grown in shade.

Soil: Intolerant to wet soils. May develop chlorosis (yellowing of the leaves) in alkaline soils.

Water: When young they'll require some water to establish roots; however, they are quite drought tolerant when established.

Fertilizer: Podocarpus likes slightly acidic soil so a dose of Miracid several times a year is helpful. These plants need additional iron and magnesium; iron is partially supplied by the Miracid.

Bloom Period: Non-flowering.

Flower Color: Non-flowering.

Size: While all of these Podocarpus can be used as hedges or screens, the taller Podocarpus can reach thirty-five to forty feet tall with a twenty-foot spread making them useful as small trees that are known to be very wind-resistant.

Toxicity: The fruits and leaves of this plant contain an unknown toxin that causes severe vomiting and diarrhea when consumed.

Pruning: Regularly used a hedging material, it can be pruned to the height you require with most people keeping their hedges between four to five feet tall.

Sources: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=podocarpus+macrophyllus;>
[https://www.theplantcompany.co.nz/shop/product/trees/podocarpus-macrophyllus.;](https://www.theplantcompany.co.nz/shop/product/trees/podocarpus-macrophyllus;)
[https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/charlotteco/2022/11/17/the-multipurpose-podocarpus/;](https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/charlotteco/2022/11/17/the-multipurpose-podocarpus/)

GAILLARDIA 'Copper Sun'(Blanket Flower)
(Gaillardia aristata)
Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: Native to subarctic America to northern U.S.A.

Overview: This Blanketflower species was used by Native Americans to waterproof rawhide bags, treat many ailments, and the flowers are said to resemble the colorful patterns that were woven into blankets.

General Characteristics and Care: The plant's fuzzy hairs can cause a skin irritation in some susceptible people. This taprooted perennial grows well in hot, dry sites in full sun but may need supplemental water during extended drought conditions. The flowers attract pollinators like bees and butterflies and the seed heads attract birds.

Zones: USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 3a to 8b.

Exposure: Full sun.

Soil: Well-drained, infertile soil. Acidic (pH<6.8). Blanketflower requires little care growing in grass-dominant areas on droughty, sandy soils. Root rot may occur in poorly drained soils.

Water: It can go without watering unless there are extremely hot and dry conditions, then it's best to water the bed once or twice per week. Avoid overwatering.

Fertilizer: Avoid feeding blanket flowers fertilizer or go light on food.

Bloom Period: Late spring, summer.

Flower Color: Red, Yellow, Purple.

Size: Grows 1 to 3 feet tall with showy daisy-like 3"- 4" flowers.

Toxicity: Blanketflower is non-toxic, easing concerns for child-friendly gardens. Mild symptoms like stomach upset may occur if ingested, but not severe. Skin irritation possible; wash with soap and water if contact occurs.

Pruning: Blanket flowers do not require deadheading to keep blooming, but the plants will look better and be fuller if you cut the stems back when the flowers start to fade. If the plant languishes in the heat of summer, cutting it back dramatically may reinvigorate it for good fall blooming.

Sources: https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=gaar;

[https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/gaillardia-](https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/gaillardia-aristata/#:~:text=Blanketflower%20is%20a%20flowering%20plant,is%20covered%20with%20fuzzy%20hairs.)

[aristata/#:~:text=Blanketflower%20is%20a%20flowering%20plant,is%20covered%20with%20fuzzy%20hairs.](https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/gaillardia-aristata/#:~:text=Blanketflower%20is%20a%20flowering%20plant,is%20covered%20with%20fuzzy%20hairs.)

BROMELIADS

(Various)

Bromeliaceae



Geographical Origin: The Bromeliaceae are a family of monocot flowering plants of about 80 genera and 3700 known species, native mainly to the tropical Americas, with several species found in the American subtropics and one in tropical west Africa, *Pitcairnia feliciana*.

Overview: This page has been added as a general placeholder for the many species of Bromeliads that are present in the garden and that at one time had overgrown it. Perhaps at a later date, each one will be identified and given its own page in the *Guide* with the entry located in the *Master Plant List Addendum*.

Given their great numbers and diversity in the garden, no other information has been provided on this page at this time. However, they are all easily recognizable by their distinctive strap-like leaves that are often rimmed and tipped (armed) with sharp spines; a central flower cup that contains water and debris; a low, clustered growth habit; and often pineapple-like flowers (pineapples are members of this plant family).

AMS 9/24

DAISY 'Dahlberg'
(Thymophylla tenuiloba)
Asteraceae



Geographical Origin: Native to south central Texas and northern Mexico.

Overview: The small but mighty Dahlberg Daisy is a powerhouse bloomer with neat tussocks of grass-green threadlike foliage cloaked with 3/4" gold flowers for months. Carefree and heat-loving, it transforms garden areas and large containers into cheerful beacons of gold.

General Characteristics and Care: A tender perennial. It produces a large number of small, yellow flowers and demonstrates a trailing habit. It is tolerant of heat and dry conditions and is sometimes sold as a summertime annual plant in areas beyond its native range. No serious insect or disease problems. Root rot may occur in poorly drained wet soils. Good drought-tolerant plant for rock gardens or desert gardens. It has a pungent citrusy fragrance when the leaves are crushed.

Zones: USDA hardiness 9-10.

Exposure: Full sun.

Soil: Will tolerate most soils if they are well-drained. Likes pH neutral to slightly acidic soils with soil measuring 6.0-8.0.

Water: Likes dry to medium soil moisture.

Fertilizer: Dahlberg Daisy does not require fertilizer, but will bloom more and longer with a small amount of balanced liquid fertilizer.

Bloom Period: Summer to fall.

Flower Color: Bright golden daisy-like flowers.

Size: 10" high and 8" wide.

Toxicity: The seeds are poisonous when consumed.

Pruning: Deadhead spent flowers to encourage additional bloom. In hot summer climates, flowering may decline in the heat of the summer. Will self-seed in the garden under optimum growing conditions.

Sources: [https://www.selectseeds.com/products/dahlberg-daisy-seeds?srsId=AfmBOop-zIfHwGtWDRWy1M0g711U1gDr2KYahLVsofD8Ph7LbwE-TnWe.;](https://www.selectseeds.com/products/dahlberg-daisy-seeds?srsId=AfmBOop-zIfHwGtWDRWy1M0g711U1gDr2KYahLVsofD8Ph7LbwE-TnWe.)

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=277616&isprofile=0&>

[;https://www.centraltexasgardener.org/resource/dahlberg-daisy/.](https://www.centraltexasgardener.org/resource/dahlberg-daisy/)