Plants of

The Burnett Honors College

Meditation Garden

An Annotated Guide

Compiled by

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Isabel Escardo-Boomsma ‘24

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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

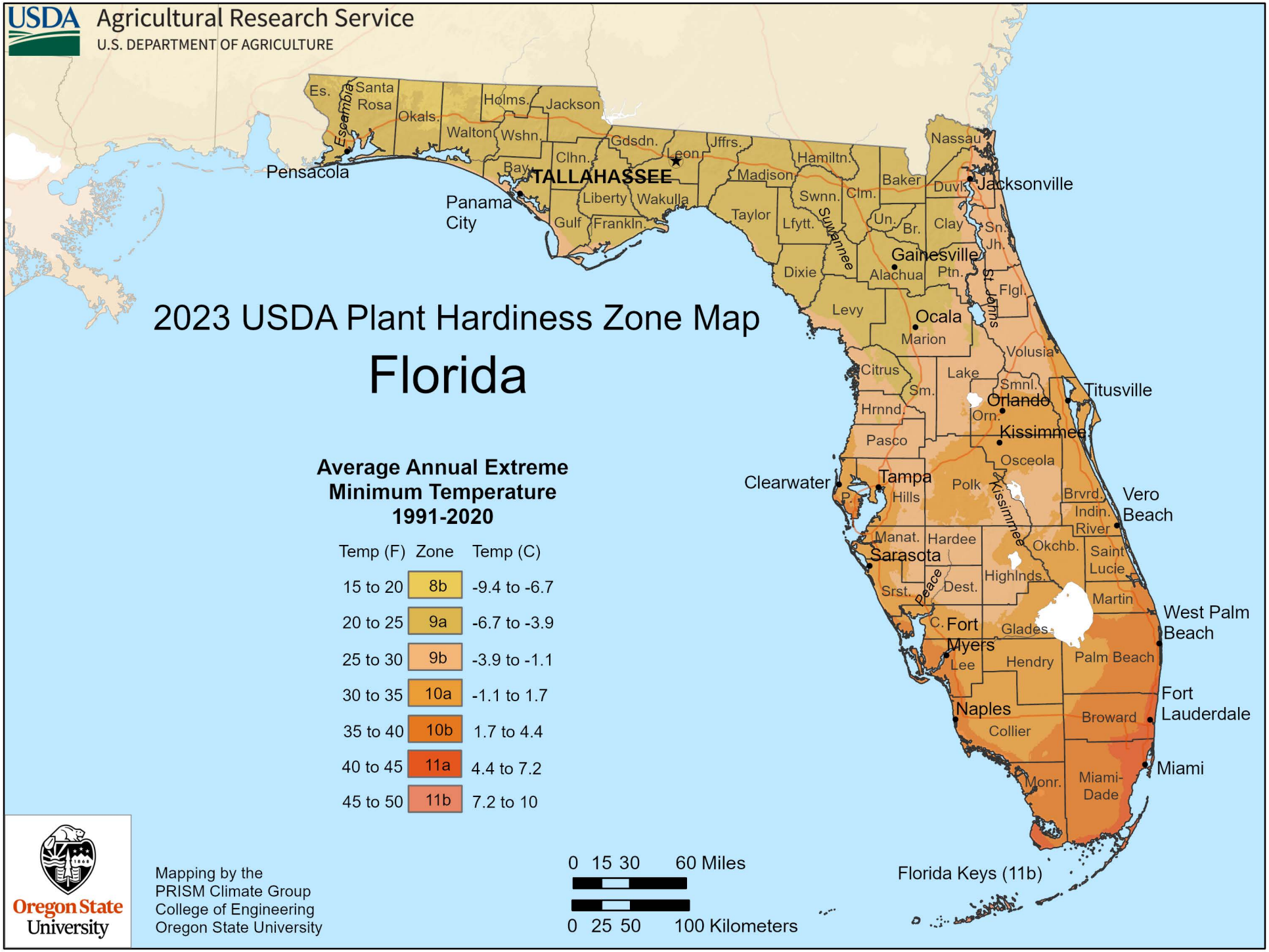
MEDITATION GARDEN

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.*


USDA
Agricultural Research Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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
Pensacola
Panama City
TALLAHASSEE
Jacksonville
Gainesville
Ocala
Orlando
Titusville
Kissimmee
Clearwater
Tampa
Vero Beach
Sarasota
West Palm Beach
Fort Myers
Fort Lauderdale
Naples
Miami
Florida Keys (11b)
Es.
Santa Rosa
Okals.
Walton
Holms.
Jackson
Wshn.
Bay
Clhn.
Gdsdn.
Leon
Jffrs.
Liberty
Wakulla
Gulf
Franklin
Madison
Taylor
Hamiltn.
Swnn.
Lfytt.
Suwannee
Clm.
Baker
Nassau
Duvl.
Un.
Br.
Clay
Sn.
Jh.
St. Johns
Dixie
Alachua
Ptn.
Flgl.
Levy
Marion
Volusia
Citrus
Lake
Sm.
Smnl.
Orn.
Hrnnd.
Pasco
Osceola
Polk
Kissimmee
Hills
P.
Brvrd.
Indin. River
Manat.
Hardee
Okchb.
Saint Lucie
Srst.
Peace
Dest.
Highlnds.
Martin
C.
Glades
Lee
Hendry
Palm Beach
Collier
Broward
Monr.
Miami-Dade
0 15 30 60 Miles
0 25 50 100 Kilometers
Mapping by the
PRISM Climate Group
College of Engineering
Oregon State University
Oregon State University

Burnett Honors College Meditation Garden
(Established 2002)
Plant List

After an absence of 19 years as the Founding Dean of the Burnett Honors College (BHC) and following her retirement from UCF, Dr. Allyn Stearman returned as a volunteer to begin a major renovation of the BHC Meditation Garden on August 1, 2023. The following is the Plant List for the garden, which is updated periodically to reflect both the *addition* and *removal* of plant material. It consists of 1) those plants previously existing in the garden that were retained during the 2023 renovation and that still remain in the garden. Dr. Stearman carried out an inventory of these plants on September 17, 2023; and 2) the new plant material that has been added to the active garden inventory.

Common Name	Scientific Name
1. African Daisy	*Gazania* spp.
2. Agapanthus 'Sky Blue'	*Agapanthus africanus*
3. Agapanthus 'dwarf'	*Agapanthus africanus*
4. Agastache 'Blue Fortune'	*Agastache* spp.
5. Ajuga 'Burgundy Glow'	*Ajuga reptans*
6. Alyssum	*Lobularia maritima*
7. Amaryllis	*Amaryllis* spp.
8. Angel Flower (butterfly bush)	*Buddleia* spp.
9. Angelonia	*Angelonia angustifolia*
10. Anthurium	*Anthurium andraeanum*
11. Asian Jasmine 'Bronze Beauty'	*Trachelospermum asiatica* 'Bronze Beauty'
12. Asian Jasmine 'Snow Cap'	*Trachelosperum asiatica* 'Snow Cap'
13. Aster 'Henry III Purple'	*Aster novi-belgii* 'Henry III Purple'
14. Azalea 'Autumn Twist'	*Rhododendron indicum*
15. Azalea (various)	*Rhododendron indicum*
16. Bacopa (white)	*Bacopa monnieri*
17. Balloon Flower	*Platycodon grandifloras* 'Twinkle White'
18. Bee Balm 'Balmy Lilac' (Monarda)	*Monarda didyma 'Balbalmac'*
19. Bee Blossum	*Gaura lindheimeri*
20. Begonia	*Begonia obliqua*
21. Bidens	*Bidens ferfulifolia*
22. Bird of Paradise 'Orange' (small)	*Strelitzia reginae*
23. Bird of Paradise (Giant)	*Strelitzia nicolai*
24. Bleeding Heart	*Clerodendrum thomsoniae*
25. Blue Daze 'Blue My Mind'	*Evolvulus glomeratus* hybrid
26. Blue Sage	*Salvia azura*
27. Boston Fern (Sword Fern)	*Nephrolepsis exalta*
28. Bottlebrush 'Weeping'	*Callistemon viminalis*

29. Bougainvillea (various)	*Bougainvillea glabra*
30. Bromeliaceae	Various
31. Brush Cherry (Eugenia topiary)	*Syzygium paniculatum* (formerly *Eugenia myrtifolia*)
32. Butterfly Bush 'Miss Violet'	*Buddleja* 'Miss Violet'
33. Caladium (various)	*Caladium* spp.
34. Calamus; Sweet Flag	*Acorus calamus*
35. Calibrachoa various	*Calibrachoa* spp.
36. Callisia 'Pink Panther'	*Callisia repens 'Pink Panther'*
37. Camellia (various)	*Camellia japonica*
38. Canna Lily	*Canna indica*
39. Cassia 'Candlesticks'	*Senna alata*
40. Celosia	*Celosia spicata*
41. Christmas Cassia	*Senna pendula*
42. Coleus (varied)	*Plectranthus scutellarioid*es
43. Confederate Jasmine	*Trachelospermum jasminoides*
44. Coontie; Cardboard Palm	*Zamia integrifolia*
45. Copper Plant	*Acalypha wilkesiana*
46. Coreopsis	*Coreopsis verticillata*
47. Cosmos	*Cosmos bipinnatus*
48. Crinum Lily 'Americum'	*Crinum Americanum*
49. Crossandra	*Crossandra infundibuliformis*
50. Croton (various)	*Codiaeum variegatum*
51. Crown of Thorns 'Pink Cadillac'	*Euphorbia milii*
52. Daisy 'Dahlberg'	*Thymophylla tenuiloba*
53. Daylily (various)	*Hemerocallis* spp.
54. Delphinium 'Diamond Blue'	*Delphinium chinensis*
55. Dianthus Pink 'Firewitch'	*Dianthus* spp.
56. Diascia 'Blush White	*Diascia bergiana*
57. Dichondra 'Silver Falls'	*Dichondra argentea*
58. Dorotheanthus 'Mezoo Red'	*Dorotheanthus bellidiformis*
59. Drift Rose	*Rosa multiflora*
60. Duck Potato	*Saggitaria latifolia*
61. Duranta 'Gold Mound'	*Duranta erecta*
62. Dusty Miller (silver ragwort)	*Senecio cineraria* (*Jacobaea Maritima*)
63. Dwarf bamboo	*Bambusa multiplex*
64. Dwarf Foxtail (chenille plant)	*Acalypha hispida*
65. Elephant Ear (California)	*Allocasia* 'California'
66. Elephant Ear 'Regal Shield'	*Alocasia* 'Regal Shield'
67. Fan Flower	*Scaevola aemula*
68. Fern 'Autumn'	*Dryopteris erythrosora*
69. Fern 'Blue Star'	*Phlebodium aureum*
70. Fern 'Foxtail'	*Asparagus densiflorus 'Meyril'*
71. Fern 'Holly'	*Cyrtomium falcatum* 'Rochfordianum'

72. Fern ‘Kangaroo Paw’	*Microsorum diversifolium*
73. Fern ‘Macho’	*Nephrolepsis biserrata*
74. Fern ‘Rabbit’s Foot’	*Davallia fejeensis*
75. Flaming Torch	*Billbergia pyramidalis*
76. Flowering Banana	*Musa ornata*
77. Gaillardia ‘Copper Sun’	*Gaillardia aristata*
78. Gardenia ‘Radicons Dwarf’	*Gardenia augusta* ‘Radicons’
79. Geranium	*Pelargonium* spp.
80. Ginger	*Zingiber officinale*
81. Ginger ‘Peacock’	*Kaempferia pulchra*
82. Ginger ‘Siam Tulip Splash’	*Curcuma alismatifolia*
83. Golden Trumpet Tree (Tabebuia)	*Handroanthus chrysotrichus*
84. Gomphrena	*Gomphrena haageana*
85. Hawaiian Ti	*Cordyline fruticose*
86. Helenium	*Helenium amarum*
87. Helianthus ‘Autumn Gold’	*Helianthus salicifolious*
88. Heliotrope ‘Aromagica Purple’	*Heliotropium arborescens*
89. Hellebore ‘Carlotta’ (Lenten Rose)	*Helleborus orientalis* ‘Carlotta’
90. Herald’s Trumpet Vine	*Beaumontia grandiflora*
91. Hibiscus (various)	*Hibiscus rosa sinensis*
92. Holly (Yaupon) Dwarf	*Ilex vomitoria* ‘Nana’
93. Horsetail Reed	*Equisetum hyemale*
94. Hosta (Sun)	*Hosta* spp. ‘Sun’
95. Hydrangea ‘Endless Summer’	*Hydrangea macrophylla*
96. Ice Plant ‘Hottentot’	*Carpobrutus spp.*
97. Impatiens (varied)	*Impatiens* spp.
98. Iresine ‘Bloodleaf”	*Iresine herbstii* ‘Bloodleaf’
99. Iris ‘Apostle Walking’	*Neomarcia caerulea* ‘Regina’
100. Iris ‘Blue Flag’	*Iris virginica* ‘Blue Flag’
101. Ixora ‘Petite’	*Ixora coccinea*
102. Japanese Holly ‘Dwarf’	*Ilex crenata compacta*
103. Kalanchoe ‘Red Lips’	*Kalanchoe thrysiflora*
104. Knock-Out Rose	*Rosa* ‘Knoeck-Out’
105. Lantana	*Lantana camara*
106. Lavender ‘Spanish Eyes’	*Lavandula multifida*
107. Licorice Plant	*Helichrysum petiolare*
108. Live Oak	*Quercus virginiana*
109. Lobelia	*Lobelia erinus*
110. Lobelia ‘Cardinal Flower’	*Lobelia cardinalis*
111. Loropetalum ‘Purple Pixie’	*Loropetalum chinense* var. Rubrum
112. Lysimachia ‘Goldilocks’	*Lysimachia nummularia*
113. Maidenhair Fern	*Adiatum musifoliam*
114. Marigold	*Tagetes* spp.
115. Melampodium	*Melampodium americanum*
116. Mexican Heather	*Cuphea hyssopifolia* ‘Florigloria’
117. Microburst Texas Sage	*Leucophyllum x Candidum*

118.	Mondo Grass (Dwarf)	*Ophiopogon japonicus*
119.	Monstera deliciosa	*Monstera deliciosa*
120.	Moses in the Bulrushes or Cradle	*Tradescantia spathacea* (a type of 'OysterPlant' *Rhoeo spathacea*)
121.	Muhly Grass (Pink)	*Muhlenbergia capillaris*
122.	Mule Palm	*Butia capitata X Syagris romanzoffiana*
123.	Nemesia 'Escential Snowberry'	*Nemesia strumosa* 'Escential Snowberry'
124.	Nemesia 'Escential Blackberry'	*Nemesia strumosa* 'Escential Blackberry'
125.	Oleander	*Nerium oleander*
126.	Orange (bitter)	*Citrus x aurantium*
127.	Orchid	*Phalaenopsis* spp.
128.	Orchid Tree (Magenta) (south building front)	*Bauhinia blakeana 'Hong Kong'*
129.	Oxalis 'Wood Sorrell'	*Oxalis tetraphylla*
130.	Oyster Plant 'Tricolor'	*Rhoeo spathacea* 'Tri-color'
131.	Peace Lily	*Spathiphyllum* spp.
132.	Peacock Ginger (Watermelon Plant)	*Kaempferia pulchra*
133.	Pentas	*Pentas lanceolata*
134.	Peperomia 'Florida'	*Peperomia obtusifolia*
135.	Petunia	*Petunia* spp.
136.	Philodendron Brasil	*Philodendron hederaceu*
137.	Philodendron 'McColley's Finale'	*Philodendron 'McColley's Finale'*
138.	Philodendron 'White Princess'	*Philodendron erubescens*
139.	Pink Mist (pincushion flower)	*Scabiosa columbari*
140.	Pink Trumpet Tree (Tabebuia)	*Tabebuia rosa*
141.	Plectranthus 'Velvet Starlet'	*Plectranthus forsteri*
142.	Plumbago	*Plumbago auriculata*
143.	Plumeria (Frangipani)	*Plumeria rubra*
144.	Podocarpus	*Podocarpus macrophyllus*
145.	Prairie Gentian	*Lisianthus grandiflorum*
146.	Prayer Plant 'Makoyana'	*Calathea* 'Makoyana'
147.	Prayer Plant 'Marion'	*Calathea majestica* 'Marion'
148.	Purple Beautyberry	*Callicarpa americana*
149.	Purple Heart	*Tradescantia pallida purpurea*
150.	Purple Queen's Wreath	*Petrea volubilis*
151.	Purslane/Portulaca	*Portulaca oleracea*
152.	Red Bay	*Persea borbonia*
153.	Red Star Ti	*Cordyline australis*
154.	Red Swamp Maple	*Acer rubrum*
155.	Royal Poinciana (north building front)	*Delonix regia*
156.	Rubber Plant 'Burgundy'	*Ficus elastica* (*Ficus robusta*) 'Burgundy'
157.	Salvia 'Sallyfun Deep Ocean Salvia'	*Salvia farinacea*
158.	Salvia 'Mystic Spires Blue'	*Salvia haematodes*

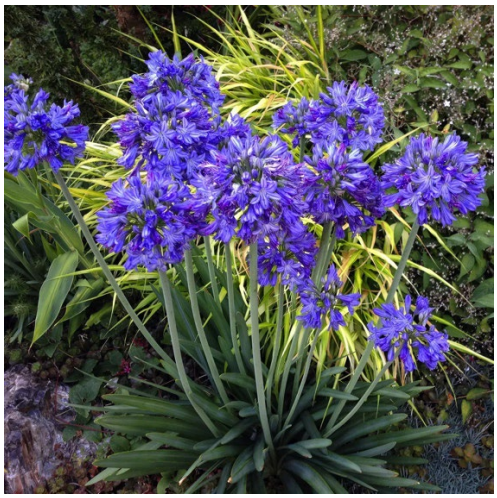
159.	Salvia ‘Mysty’	*Salvia longispicata x fariniceae*
160.	Samoan Sunshine tree	*Erythrina variegata*
161.	Schefflera ‘Gold Capella’	*Schefflera arbicola ‘Gold Capella’*
162.	Sedum ‘Lemon Coral’	*Sedum rupestre* ‘Lemon Coral’
163.	Selloum	*Thaumatophyllum bipinnatifidum*
164.	Shell Ginger	*Alpinia zerumbe*
165.	Shrimp Plant ‘Red’	*Justicia brandegeana*
166.	Snake Plant; Mother-in-Law Tongue	*Draceana trifasciata* (*Sansevieria trifasciata)*
167.	Sparkler Daisy	*Osteospermum* ‘Voltage Yellow’
168.	Spiderplant	*Chlorophytum comosum*
169.	Spurflower	*Plectranthus* spp. ‘Magic Mona’
170.	Staghorn Fern	*Platycerium* spp.
171.	Stromanthe	*Stromanthe sanguinea* ‘Triostar’
172.	‘Sugarbelle’® Tangelo	*Citrus reticulata x Citrus x aurantium*
173.	Swamp Fern	*Blechnum serrulatum*
174.	Sweet Potato Vine	*Ipomoea batatas*
175.	Thryallis	*Galphimia glauca*
176.	Tibouchina ‘Jules Dwarf’(Princess Flower)	*Tibouchina* spp.
177.	Tropicanna Canna	*Canna indica* ‘Tropicanna’
178.	Verbena	*Verbena officinalis*
179.	Veronica ‘Moodyblues’	*Veronica officinalis*
180.	Viburnum	*Viburnum* spp.
181.	Vinca	*Catharanthus roseus*
182.	Wishbone Flower	*Torenia fournieri*
183.	Yellow Alder (Buttercup)	*Turnera ulmifolia*
184.	Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow	*Brunfelsia pauciflora*
185.	Zinnia	*Zinnia* spp.

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 daises 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-1-d&q=Agapanthus+pH;
https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/bulbs/agapanthus/cold-hardiness-of-agapanthus.htm

AGASTACHE "Blue Fortune'

(*Agastache foeniculum* (Anise Hyssop) x *Agastache rugosa* (Korean Mint).
Lamiaceae

***Geographical Origin*:**
***Overview*:** Agastache is low maintenance and tolerates heat and drought once established. Butterflies and hummingbirds love to sample the nectar-rich blooms. A nice feature in an herb garden or mixed border. Masses of soft lavender-blue flowers are held over large, deep-green, minty licorice-scented foliage.
General Characteristics and Care: Most will self-sow to spread, so deadhead by removing faded flowers to prevent re-seeding unless desired. Leave stems to overwinter. It is a good choice for the southeast gardener as it tolerates humidity better than some Hyssops. Mass plant in a perennial border, along a walkway or near a patio to enjoy the minty-licorice fragrance. It also works well in a home garden, butterfly garden, or cutting garden.
Zones: USDA Zone 5-10.
Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: It is tolerant of dry soils and heat once established but it will not tolerate heavy clay or poorly draining soils. Agastache 'Blue Fortune' thrives in a slightly acidic to neutral soil with a pH between 6.0 and 7.0.
Water: Keep moist but do not overwater.
Fertilizer: Needs fertilizer that is high in phosphorous for a good bloom. Bone meal is excellent for this plant.
Bloom Period: Blooms from early summer to late fall.
Flower Color: Dusty lavender in tall spikes.
Size: Grows 2'-3' tall and 1-2' wide.
Toxicity: Agastache 'Blue Fortune' is generally considered non-toxic to both humans and pets, including dogs and cats.
Pruning: Pruning Agastache Blue Fortune primarily involves spring cleanup, deadheading, and occasional shaping. The best time to prune is late winter or early spring before new growth emerges, allowing you to remove dead or damaged stems and promote healthy new growth. Deadheading spent flowers encourages more blooms.

Sources: https://www.bluestoneperennials.com/AGBF.html?srsltid=AfmBOopPCRW7XxBcK-_xQQOidmhOvHhUFZLjIcWqhr0cRJuuND4nlLbB.; https://www.bluestoneperennials.com/AGBF.html?srsltid=AfmBOor5t5Vigc-R-rmyRRhHO2ci7iCbBRDG1bPLQQlOS30yEY3OA1MS.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/agastache-blue-fortune/.;

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.

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/

AMARYLLIS
(*Amaryllis* spp.)
Amaryllidaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to South Africa.
***Overview*:** Plants of the genus *Amaryllis* are known as belladonna lily, Jersey lily, naked lady, amarillo, Easter lily in Southern Australia or, in South Africa, March lily due to its propensity to flower around March. This is one of numerous genera with the common name 'lily' due to their flower shape and growth habit. However, they are only distantly related to the true lily, *Lilium*.
General Characteristics and Care: *Amaryllis* is a bulbous plant, with each bulb being 2.0–3.9 in in diameter. It has several strap-shaped, hysteranthous, green leaves with midrib, 12–20 in. long and 0.79–1.18 in breadth, arranged in two rows. Amaryllis may be acquired as bare or planted bulbs and are prized for their exotic trumpet-shaped flowers on 1- to 2-foot leafless stalks or *scapes*. They add dramatic color to homes and gardens and make wonderful gifts to gardeners from beginners to experts. The bulbs, in boxes, are frequently sold at stores at Christmas.
Zones: Amaryllis are generally hardy in USDA zones 8-10.
Exposure: They need full sun with at least 6-8 hours of direct sun daily.
Soil: Amaryllis bulbs thrive in well-drained soil with a slightly acidic to neutral pH, ideally between 6.0 and 6.8.
Water: Amaryllis plants need to be watered when the top inch of soil is dry.
Fertilizer: Fertilize monthly with an all-purpose plant fertilizer.
Bloom Period: Amaryllis typically bloom in the late fall to early spring (approximately November to May).
Flower Color: The most popular colors are red and white, but flowers may also be pink, salmon, apricot, rose or deep burgundy. Some varieties are bicolor such as purple and green, or *picotee* (having petals with a different edge color).
Size: Amaryllis flowers range from 4 to 10 inches in size and can be either single or double in form. The overall size of the plant when in bloom can be quite impressive, especially with larger bulbs. Some can reach 3 feet in height or even taller.
Toxicity: Amaryllis plants are toxic to both humans and pets. The primary toxin is *lycorine*, an alkaloid concentrated in the bulb, but it's also present in other parts of the plant like the leaves and flowers.
Pruning: After blooming, cut off the flower stalks, but keep the leaves to allow the bulb to store energy for future blooms.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amaryllis.; https://extension.umn.edu/houseplants/amaryllis.; https://www.longfield-gardens.com/article/growing-amaryllis-outdoors-in-zones-9-11/?srsltid=AfmBOoqDEeexnnVC_kvEi6D3CRdK1uIEOZER2geZ9bT0GeaCBtIc6a8J.

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 ‘Bronze Beauty’
(*Trachelospermum asiaticum* ‘Bronze Beauty’)
Apocynaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Asia.
***Overview*:** A vigorous, sprawling evergreen vine with glossy green foliage and bronze new growth. A tightly branched groundcover forming a dense mat of foliage. Its flowers resemble stars, so it is also referred to as Yellow Star Jasmine or Asian Star Jasmine.
General Characteristics and Care: This is a fast-growing vine, often used to cover fences, walls, and similar surfaces. It is heat- and cold- tolerant and grows even in shady areas. The glossy green leaves have a brown-orange tinge stained reddish during the winter. The white or cream flowers have a yellow heart and emit a scent of jasmine. The hardiest of the *Trachelospermum* species, this plant can be grown in temperate areas against a sheltered wall or fence. It has been known to spread rapidly and can take over large areas very quickly.
Zones: USDA Zones 7-11.
Exposure: Will grow in full sun to shade.
Soil: Asian Jasmine 'Bronze Beauty', like other varieties of Asiatic Jasmine, generally prefers a soil pH between 5.5 and 7.0. While it can tolerate a wider range (5.0 - 8.0), a slightly acidic to neutral pH is optimal for healthy growth.
Water: Well-drained soil is crucial. Once established, it exhibits moderate drought tolerance and generally only needs watering during dry spells or extreme heat.
Fertilizer: When in good soil, Asian Jasmine does not require anything but mulch. If fertilizer is needed, a good balanced granular or liquid fertilizer is recommended.
Bloom Period: It has strongly jasmine-scented flowers in summer.
Flower Color: Cream to white.
Size: Height: Growing to 6 m (20 ft) tall, *Trachelospermum asiaticum* is a woody, evergreen climber.
Toxicity: Asian Jasmine, including the "Bronze Beauty" cultivar, is generally considered non-toxic to humans and pets. However, it does have a sticky, white sap that will stain clothing and is hard to remove from hands and tools. Mineral spirits is a good solvent to remove sap.
Pruning: When used as a ground cover, it can be pruned into a dense mound with clear, hard margins, making for an attractive planted bed.

Sources: https://www.gardencentermarketing.com/plantName/Trachelospermum-asiaticum-Bronze-Beauty?srsltid=AfmBOoqmNcjyMiRu6brGb6r6o6Ddbnfn2Bi-q6wHgoi0qMOOaoIlZR_A.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trachelospermum_asiaticum.; https://vitalityfarmscompany.com/product/bronze-beauty-minima-jasmine-groundcover/.

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: *Trachelospermum 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 sogginess, 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/Trachelospermum_asiaticum; https://www.gardenia.net/plant/trachelospermum-asiaticum-snow-n-summer; https://www.gurneys.com/product/snow-n-summer-asiatic-jasmine; https://www.etsy.com/market/asia_snow_jasmine.

ASTER 'Henry III Purple'
(*Symphyotrichum novi-belgii*)
Asteraceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to the East Coast of North America, from Nova Scotia to South Carolina.
***Overview*:** This cultivar is specifically bred for home gardens and the broader species *Aster novi-belgii,* also known as the New York Aster or Michaelmas Daisy, is found in moist meadows and woodlands in this region. Flowers are a rich, lavender-purple, with double blossoms that closely resemble the flowers of a Zinnia, though much smaller. With the double blooms and the prolific blooming habit, these asters look like purple clouds when in full bloom. Asters are star performers in fall gardens.
General Characteristics and Care: Aster Henry III Purple adds a splash of purple color to your garden during the autumn season. Blooming in the late season, it produces beautiful, bright purple blue flowers. Each flower is a medium size, and you will find an abundance of them on this plant. Henry III Purple Aster forms a nice mounded habit which keeps it looking neat and tidy.
Zones: USDA Hardiness Zones 5-9.
Exposure: Full sun. Needs at least 6 hours per day.
Soil: The cultivar *Aster novi-belgii* 'Henry III Purple' tolerates a wide range of soil pH, from acidic to alkaline, though it thrives best in slightly acidic to neutral soil, a pH of 6.0 to 7.0.
Water: Needs consistent watering in well-drained soil.
Fertilizer: Fertilize with a balanced, slow-release fertilizer in early spring or amend the soil with compost once a year, as they are not heavy feeders and thrive in average to rich, well-drained soil.
Bloom Period: Late summer to fall.
Flower Color: A very deep blue-purple.
Size: The plant typically grows 18' tall and up to 24'wide.
Toxicity: This plant is not considered toxic to humans or pets.
Pruning: Pinch back the stems in early summer to promote bushier growth and more compact plants. In late fall, after the first frost, you should cut back the spent top growth to the ground level after the foliage has died back. For maintenance, divide the plant clumps every 3-4 years in spring to maintain vigor.

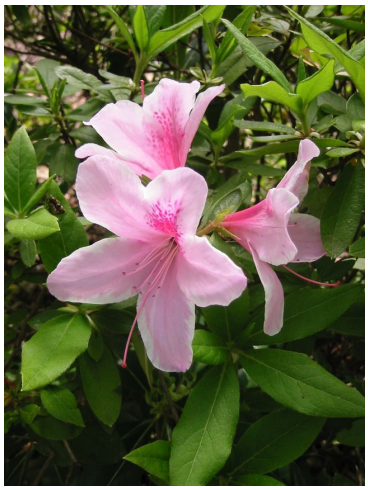
Sources: https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/aster/henry-iii-purple-aster-novi-belgii; https://www.lucasgreenhouses.com/plant/Aster-Novi-Belgii-Henry-III-Purple; https://www.gardencrossings.com/product/aster-henry-iii-purple/?srsltid=AfmBOoq0f9aEHFyJqC_8_d1baLGL-OTy0Ouas-vm9QKT60AXYLSp74DE.

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://ideas4garden.com/plants/autumn-twist-encore-azalea/; https://www.poison.org/articles/azaleas-and-rhododendrons; https://ideas4garden.com/plants/autumn-twist-encore-azalea/.

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.

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-monnieri-benefits; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bacopa_monnieri; https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/herbs/bacopa-plants/brahmi-plant-care-and-uses.htm; https://pondinformer.com/moneywort-waterhyssop-bacopa-monnieri/; https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/herbs/bacopa-plants/brahmi-plant-care-and-uses.htm.

BALOON 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.[
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.;

BEE BALM ‘Balmy Lilac’ (Monarda)
(*Monarda didyma*)
Lamiaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to North America.
***Overview*:** This showy perennial is a striking addition to informal borders. The boldness of its blooms makes it terrific for massing or as an accent plant. Great for containers and small gardens, it makes excellent cut flowers too. Monarda flowers attract streams of butterflies, hummingbirds, and other beneficial pollinators, but this plant is deer and rabbit resistant. The genus was named for the Spanish botanist Nicolás Monardes, who wrote a book in 1574 describing plants of the New World.
General Characteristics and Care: The primary drawback of bee balm (Monarda) is its susceptibility to powdery mildew, a fungal disease that can affect the plant's appearance and potentially reduce its vigor. Additionally, bee balm is known for its vigorous spreading habit, which can be considered invasive under certain conditions. Bee Balm belongs to the mint family, Lamiaceae, which also includes well-known culinary herbs such as lavender, rosemary, basil, sage, and oregano.
Zones: USDA Zones 4-9.
Exposure: The best place to plant bee balm is a location with full sun to partial shade that receives at least 6 hours of sun daily.
Soil: It grows best in a moist, rich loamy soil with high organic matter content but can tolerate almost any well-drained soil. Prefers a pH in the 6.0 to 7.0 range.
Water: Keep soil moist but not soggy. Does not tolerate dry conditions.
Fertilizer: Optimal growth involves balanced nutrition fertilizers, especially during active growth in spring and summer. Fertilize monthly with a diluted water-soluble blend; a quarter-strength ratio is sufficient.
Bloom Period: Blooms late spring and summer.
Flower Color: Boldly colored, shaggy, lilac-purple flowers.
Size: Height 10”-1’; Spread 8”-10”.
Toxicity: Bee balm is not poisonous to humans. The leaves will not harm a cat, dog, or other animals in any way.
Pruning: Deadhead spent flowers to encourage new blooms. Fast-growing, Monarda spreads vigorously and will need to be divided every 3 years. Should be cut to the ground after flowering to promote the growth of new healthy shoots and leaves.

Sources: https://www.gardenia.net/plant/monarda-balmy-lilac; https://www.monrovia.com/balmy-lilac-bee-balm.html?srsltid=AfmBOoqilBF87OY-Nr0pBQgESJQ8T5gSt81LYB40Uiukz7c2-2SJEUCv; https://www.bloomables.com/plants/balmy-lilac-monarda/; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarda.

Bee Blossum
(*Gaura lindheimeri*)
Onagraceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Southern United States and Mexico
***Overview*:** Also known as Lindheimer's Bee Blossom, 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 Blossom 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 Blossom 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.

BEGONIA
(*Begonia obliqua*)
Begoniaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Central and South America, Africa and Asia.
***Overview*:** Begonias are found as forest understory plants in their native habitats. They are grown as houseplants, herbaceous perennials or annual bedding plants. The name, *Begonia*, honors Michael Begon (1638-1710), who was the Governor of French Canada.
General Characteristics and Care: Most cultivated begonias prefer a humid environment. They do not tolerate cold temperatures below 55 degrees Fahrenheit. The leaves and flowers are very fragile and should be protected from high winds. Monitor for pests such as mealybugs, whiteflies, snails, and slugs. Avoid overwatering because begonias are highly susceptible to root rot. Fungal leaf diseases such as powdery mildew can develop.
Zones: USDA zones 10a, 10b, 11a, 11b.
Exposure: Partial shade.
Soil: Will thrive in moist, well-drained soil with high organic matter and acidic to mildly alkaline pH ranging from 5.5 to 8.
Water: Every 2-4 days. It is a best practice to water the plant at the base and avoid the leaves to prevent fungal disease and reduce risk of rot.
Fertilizer: Should be fertilized monthly, avoid fertilizing during winter when begonias go dormant. Fertilizers high in phosphorus are ideal as they promote flower production and help develop strong root systems. Look for NPK value of 5-10-5 or 10-10-10.
Bloom Period: Fall, Summer.
Flower Color: Gold/yellow, orange, pink, red/burgundy, white.
Size: Height: 8 in. - 2 ft. Width: 9 in. - 1 ft.
Toxicity: If ingested, kidney failure (in grazing animals), vomiting, and salivation in dogs/cats. The most toxic part is the underground roots. Sap can cause skin irritation.
Pruning: During growing season (spring through early fall), Cut back the growing tips on begonias branches every 2 to 4 weeks or if your plants become leggy. The plant will produce new branches from the pinched point. Additional stems provide more opportunities for the begonia to create flowers.

Sources: https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/begonia/; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Begonia ; https://dutchflowerbulbs.com/blogs/guides-spring/how-to-care-for-begonias-the-ultimate-caring-guide-for-begonias#:~:text=A%20fertilizer%20with%20an%20NPK,improve%20the%20soil's%20overall%20health.; https://bouqs.com/blog/begonia-care/#:~:text=during%20the%20summer.

BIDENS
(*Bidens ferfulifolia*)
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 ‘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

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.

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-salvria-azurea/; https://meadowlarkjournal.com/blog/pruning-salvias; https://www.gardenia.net/plant/salvia-azurea; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/salvia-azurea/

BOSTON FERN (Sword Fern)
(*Nephrolepis exaltata*)
Lomariopsidaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Central America, North America, South America, Africa, Pacific Islands.
***Overview*:** Boston fern, also known as sword fern, is a popular fern species that grows in many tropical areas around the world. In North America, it is considered a classic houseplant and is easy to care for, as it doesn't require a lot of sunlight and can live on for years. It also purifies the air and increases humidity in a room. Outdoors, this perennial plant thrives in swampy, humid, and forested areas, and makes a good choice for partial-shade gardens in places like Southern California or Florida.
General Characteristics and Care: This plant prefers warm and humid conditions. Mist to raise the ambient humidity. Opt for loamy soil with good drainage. Water Boston fern frequently to prevent the soil from drying out and fertilize the plant regularly during its active growing stage. Caring for Boston ferns is a commitment, since they require consistent moist soil, bright light and high humidity. Learning how to care for a Boston fern isn't difficult, but it is specific. Growing ferns indoors requires ongoing attention.
Zones: USDA Zones 9-11.
Exposure: Shade to partial sun.
Soil: Boston ferns thrive in soil with a slightly acidic pH range, ideally between 5.0 and 5.5.
Water: Needs to be kept moist but needs to drain well.
Fertilizer: Fertilize during the growth months (spring, summer) with a light mixture of fertilizer such as Miracid.
Bloom Period: Does not flower; Herbaceous, perennial.
Flower Color: Does not flower.
Size: This evergreen plant can reach as high as 40–90 centimeters (16–35 in), and in extreme cases up to 1.5 meters (4ft 11in).
Toxicity: Boston ferns are generally considered non-toxic to both humans and pets.
Pruning: Pruning Boston ferns involves removing dead or damaged fronds and trimming side fronds to promote bushier growth. While most ferns are propagated by *spores*, the Boston fern is considered to be sterile. Instead of spores, it propagates through slender *stolons* (a creeping, horizontal plant stem or runner that takes root at points along its length to form new plants) that dangle from the plant. When the stolons touch the soil, a new plant forms.

Sources: https://www.thespruce.com/grow-nephrolepis-boston-ferns-1902723; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nephrolepis_exaltata.; https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/houseplants/boston-fern/boston-fern-care.htm.

BOTTLEBRUSH ‘Weeping’
(*Callistemon* [*Melaleuca*] *viminalis*)
Myrtaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Originates from the eastern coast of Australia, specifically ranging from Cape York in Queensland to New South Wales.
***Overview*:** The weeping bottlebrush tree is a dream of a tree, one of the most popular small flowering trees for its small stature, red flowers, and romantic weeping form. Like a miniature weeping willow, this pretty tree has grace and beauty unrivalled as an artistic specimen or even as a privacy plant. The specific epithet (*viminalis*) means "having long, slender branches."
General Characteristics and Care: Each one is unique, clean and hardy, making it a good choice for low-maintenance landscaping. Weeping trees like the bottlebrush add a soft, whimsical touch to the landscape. The streaming branches, the brilliant red blossoms and the small height and full form work in almost any size yard. Appearing at the end of arching branches, the fuzzy red flowers attract butterflies, hummingbirds and honeybees.
Zones: USDA Hardiness Zones 9–11, with some, like 'Red Cascade', capable of thriving in parts of Zone 8.
Exposure: Full sun.
Soil: They thrive in well-draining, moist soil with a slightly acidic to neutral pH, generally ranging from 5.5 to 7.0**,** though they can tolerate slightly alkaline conditions up to 7.5.
Water: Water regularly until established; once established, water during extended dry periods.
Fertilizer: Apply a balanced fertilizer in early spring to support healthy growth and blooming.
Bloom Period: It blooms heavily in spring and then on and off the rest of the year.
Flower Color: It is known for its vibrant, bright red flower spikes resembling a brush.
Size: It is a large shrub or small tree growing to 10 m (30 ft) tall with hard, fibrous, furrowed bark. It may have a number of trunks and usually pendulous branches.
Toxicity: Weeping Bottlebrush is considered non-toxic to dogs, cats, and horses.
Pruning: Prune lightly after flowering to maintain shape and encourage new growth.

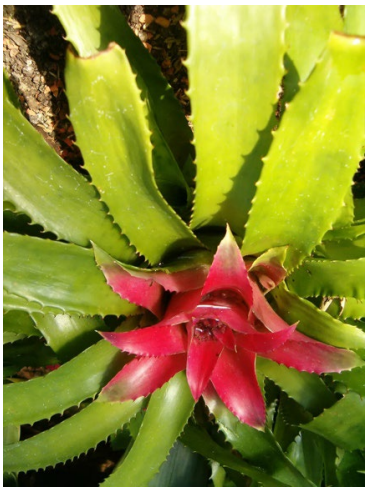
Sources: https://www.south-florida-plant-guide.com/bottlebrush-tree.html.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melaleuca_viminalis.; https://libertylandscapesupply.com/products/weeping-bottlebrush?srsltid=AfmBOoqzJJXU9cTerp8vCCv1mUD06LVVCj55uyiW5PtsvxKCEpr0d0d4.;

BOUGAINVILLEA (Various)
(*Bougainvillea glabra*)
Nyctaginaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Mexico, Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay, and Argentina.
***Overview*:** The "flowers" (inflorescences) consist of large colorful sepal-like *bracts*, which surround three simple waxy flowers, gaining popularity for the plant as an ornamental. The plant is named after explorer Louis Antoine de Bougainville (1729–1811), after it was documented on one of his expeditions.
General Characteristics and Care: The species may grow very tall, scrambling over other plants with their spiky thorns. They are evergreen where rainfall occurs all year, or deciduous if there is a dry season. The plant is sterile and is propagated from stem cuttings. Despite their exotic flair, bougainvilleas are surprisingly low-maintenance: drought-tolerant, fast-growing, and practically built for hot, dry spots where other plants fade.
Zones: USDA Hardiness Zones 9–11.
Exposure: Require full sun for best blooms.
Soil: Require well-draining, slightly acidic soil (pH 5.5–7.0) to prevent root rot and encourage blooming.
Water: They need ample water when young but then can thrive in a dry environment.
Fertilizer: Use a low-nitrogen, high-potassium, and phosphorus-rich fertilizer (like 5-10-10 or 10-10-10) every 4–6 weeks to encourage blooming rather than excessive foliage growth.
Bloom Period: Bougainvilleas may flower almost year-round when planted outside in their native warm climates.
Flower Color: Blooming is on new growth. The actual flower is small, tubular, and generally white, but each cluster of three flowers is surrounded by three to six brightly colored bracts, including pinks, purple, red, orange, white, or yellow colors.
Size: The plants simply need enough space to spread out as they produce vines up to 40 feet long. This plant sprawls and needs training as it grows.
Toxicity: Bougainvillea is considered mildly toxic to humans and pets, primarily causing skin irritation from its thorns and, rarely, mild gastrointestinal distress if ingested.
Pruning: Prune bougainvillea in early spring to encourage bushy growth and massive blooms, as flowers grow on new, young shoots. Remove dead/damaged wood, shortening long, erratic branches by about a third, and trimming back to just above a node.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bougainvillea.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/bougainvillea/.; https://www.almanac.com/plant/bougainvillea.; https://horticultureunlimited.com/plant-guide/bougainvillea/.

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).

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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://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 pruniers) 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/.

CALIBRACHOA (Million Bells)
(*Calibrachoa* spp.)
Solanaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to South America.
***Overview*:** Calibrachoa are also called Million Bells or Trailing Petunia because of their prolific, bell-shaped flowers and their resemblance to petunias. They are a fairly new ornamental, introduced in the 1990s, and rapidly gained popularity with the gardening world. Calibrachoa foliage is often sticky to the touch and each plant produces a lot of flowers all season long.
General Characteristics and Care: Calibrachoa is a genus of plants in the Solanaceae (Nightshade) family. They are evergreen short-lived perennials and subshrubs with a sprawling habit, with small petunia-type flowers. Recently, Calibrachoa have been bred to be more mounding and more compact, and the available flower colors and patterns have expanded. Yellowing leaves can occur if they are overwatered, have poorly draining soil or are not getting enough nutrition, *especially iron*.
Zones: USDA zones 9-11.
Exposure: The plants can tolerate light frost and thrive in sun or semi-shade.
Soil: Calibrachoa grow best in light, well-draining soil that is slightly acidic. Calibrachoa plants thrive in soil with a pH between 5.5 and 6.0.
Water: Plant in a free-draining soil and water only when the soil is almost dry.
Fertilizer: A balanced, water-soluble fertilizer applied every 2-4 weeks during the growing season is recommended, or a slow-release fertilizer at planting. A 20-10-20 fertilizer with a slow-release mechanism is also a good option.
Bloom Period: In full bloom from May through first frost.
Flower Color: A wide range of colors including shades of violet, blue, pink, red, magenta, yellow, bronze, and white.
Size: Typically grows to a height of 6-12 inches and a width of 12-24 inches.
Toxicity: Calibrachoa is generally considered non-toxic to humans, pets, and children. While not classified as poisonous, ingesting the plant may cause mild gastrointestinal upset in some individuals.
Pruning: Pinch back to encourage bushier growth if plants become leggy. The beauty of a Calibrachoa over a Petunia is it doesn't need deadheading. They are self-cleaning.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calibrachoa.; https://www.homesandgardens.com/gardens/how-to-grow-calibrachoa.; https://www.pthorticulture.com/en-us/training-center/growing-tough-crops-calibrachoa.; https://extension.umn.edu/flowers/calibrachoa.

CALLISIA ‘Pink Panther’
(*Callisia repens*’ Pink Panther’)
Commelinaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to the Americas from southern Canada to northern Argentina, including the West Indies.
***Overview*:** Also known as the ‘Creeping Inch Plant’, Turtle Vine, or Bolivian Dude, Callisia is a fast-growing, low-maintenance succulent known for its trailing stems and small, dense leaves. It is a popular houseplant grown in hanging baskets or containers, and in warm climates, it can be used as a groundcover.
General Characteristics and Care: It is naturalized in Hong Kong and grows on rooftops. In Western Australia, it is an invasive species due to its rapid growth, its tolerance to various environments, and the ground cover effect which makes it spread very quickly, suffocating local plants or preventing them from germinating. The species is easily propagated by cuttings. It is also marketed as a houseplant for its drooping habit and the scent of its white flowers. Strong light makes the foliage turn pink; the plant can stand direct sunlight if the humidity is high.
Zones: USDA Zones 8-11. It is intolerant to frost. In cooler climates, the plant must be brought indoors during the winter. They prefer temperatures between 60 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit.
Exposure: It thrives in bright, indirect light.
Soil: Callisia prefers consistently moist, but not waterlogged, soil. The plant also prefers a pH of 5.0 to 6.5.
Water: Water Callisia regularly, so that the soil is kept slightly moist, but it doesn't like wet feet.
Fertilizer: During the growing season, fertilize sparingly once a month with a water-based balanced formula. A slow-release granular fertilizer would also give the plant plenty of nutrients every three to four months.
Bloom Period: Summer.
Flower Color: Small, white flowers that appear in dense axillary paired clusters, enclosed by the sheath and leaf bases.
Size: Low growing to 4 inches tall and spreading to 4 feet or more on stems that root at the joints.
Toxicity: Be aware that the turtle vine is toxic to pets and children, if ingested. The sap may also cause skin irritation for humans and pets.
Pruning: Trim dead stems or stems that have begun to get leggy. Optionally, remove spent flowers for a better aesthetic.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Callisia_repens; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/callisia-repens/; https://worldofsucculents.com/callisia-repens-turtle-vine/; https://www.epicgardening.com/callisia-repens/.

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.[
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 Lilium 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.

CASSIA ‘Candlesticks’
(*Senna alata*)
Fabaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to most of the Neotropics (from Mexico and the West Indies to Paraguay).
***Overview*:** It also known as Emperor's Candlesticks, Candle Bush, Candelabra Bush, Christmas Candles, Empress Candle Plant, Roman Candle, or Candletree. It is also commonly called Ringworm Cassia because the plant leaves were once used to treat ringworm. Specific epithet means “winged” for the shape of the seedpods.
General Characteristics and Care: In the tropics, it is grown as an ornamental flowering shrub or small tree. Senna alata is both valued for its ornamental beauty and its potent medicinal applications. This evergreen shrub is famous for its bright yellow, candle-shaped flower clusters and large, lush leaves.
Zones: USDA zones 9-11.
Exposure: Full sun to part shade.
Soil: Thrives in well-drained, fertile soil, ideally sandy or loamy, with a pH ranging from mildly acidic to basic. It prefers consistently moist, nutrient-rich soil but is highly adaptable to various soil types, including heavy clay.
Water: Drought tolerant once established. It thrives with weekly watering during dry periods, though young seedlings prefer daily watering for optimal growth.
Fertilizer: *Senna alata* is a fast-growing, low-maintenance plant that requires minimal fertilizer. It thrives with a balanced fertilizer (10-10-10 or 5-10-5) or organic compost applied during the growing season (spring/summer) every 4–6 weeks to encourage flowering.
Bloom Period: Primarily blooms from late summer through fall.
Flower Color: Bright yellow, upright showy racemes that resemble candles.
Size: Height: 5-8 ft; Spread: 3-4 ft.
Toxicity: It is safe for medicinal use, such as treating skin infections, though excessive consumption can cause laxative side effects.
Pruning: Prune annually in late spring or immediately after flowering to maintain shape, improve structural strength, and encourage bushier growth with more blooms.

Sources:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senna_alata#:~:text=Senna%20alata%20is%20an%20important%20medicinal%20tree%2C,ornamental%20flowering%20plant%20in%20the%20subfamily%20Caesalpinioideae.;
https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=280477.;
https://www.fnai.org/species-communities/invasives/invasive-species?ID=149.

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/grrowing/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/

CHRISTMAS CASSIA
(*Senna pendula*)
Fabaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, and the Caribbean.
Overview: Common names also include rambling senna (formerly "cassia"), winter cassia, Christmas bush, money bush, and yellow candlewood. The seedpod flavor resembles tamarind. The leaves can be cooked as a vegetable, which can be mixed with other leaves, beans or peas. The Nahuas of San Luís Potosí, Mexico, use this plant to combat enchantment.
General Characteristics and Care: It is naturalized and invasive in several coastal areas in the tropics, where it is found in roadsides and disturbed areas, wooded grasslands, fallow land and riparian zones. Caterpillars often eat the foliage and flower buds in the fall, but they can be picked off by hand. They are also susceptible to mealy bugs. While other trees are dormant in the fall and winter, butterfly bush is showing off with bright yellow flowers that appear at a time of year when little else is in bloom. This plant is a stunning addition to any sunny landscape and attracts butterflies. It needs little care once established but occasionally requires watering during periods of drought.
Zones: *Senna bicapsularis* grows well in USDA plant hardiness zones 9a, through 11b.
Exposure: Senna needs at least six hours of direct sunlight per day. It can tolerate partial shade but may produce fewer flowers.
Soil: *Senna bicapsularis* prefers well-drained, average garden soil that's not too rich in nutrients. It can tolerate a range of soil types, including clay loam, silt, and sand. It prefers slightly acidic to neutral pH (6.0-7.0).
Water: Water when the top inch of soil is dry. It can tolerate drought once established.
Fertilizer: During the growing season, apply a balanced fertilizer with an N-P-K ratio of 10-10-10. Fertilize sparingly, as too much can lead to excessive foliage growth.
Bloom Period: Late fall and winter.
Flower Color: Bright yellow and gold.
Size: Height: 8-12 ft.; Width: 8-10 ft.
Toxicity: While *Cassia* is generally safe, eating too much can cause mild gastrointestinal upset in dogs. The specific toxins that cause toxicity in humans and animals are not known, but it's attributed to anthraquinones, alkaloids, and their derivatives.
Pruning: *Senna bicapsularis* can tolerate severe pruning and will grow back. Trees often fall over because if left unpruned, they become top-heavy and will require staking to hold them upright. Pruning encourages a more compact growth habit.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senna_bicapsularis.; https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=senna+bicapsularis+care.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/senna-bicapsularis/.;

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/

COPPER PLANT
(*Acalypha wilkesiana*)
Euphorbiaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Originates from the South Pacific Islands**,** specifically Fiji and Vanuatu**.** It is a tropical evergreen shrub that thrives in warm, humid climates and is widely used for its vibrant, variegated foliage in tropical landscapes.
***Overview*:** Also known as Copperleaf or Jacob's Coat. It is used in mixed hedges and shrub borders and as a specimen shrub. The genus name Acalypha comes from the Greek name for nettles because of the nettle-like appearance of the leaves. The specific epithet references Charles Wilkes.
General Characteristics and Care: It has a closely arranged crown, with an erect stem and many branches. Both the branches and the leaves are covered in fine hairs. The leaves, which may be flat or crinkled, are large and broad with teeth around the edge. The leaves are coppery green with red splashes, giving them a mottled appearance.
Zones: It is best suited to USDA hardiness zones 10-12.
Exposure: Partial shade or sun.
Soil: Thrive in rich, fertile, and well-draining soil with a slightly acidic to neutral pH of 6.0–7.0.
Water: They require consistently moist soil, especially in high sunlight, but need good drainage to prevent root rot.
Fertilizer: Copper plant fertilizer requirements include adding copper sulfate or chelated copper to the soil, particularly for sandy, high-pH, or organic soils. It is a critical micronutrient for plant elasticity and seed development. For specific copper plants (like *Acalypha*), use a 10-10-10 or 20-20-20 NPK fertilizer every 4-6 weeks, increasing to 2-4 weeks during peak blooming.
Bloom Period: Blooms generally appear from summer to fall**,** though in warm, tropical, or subtropical climates, they can bloom sporadically year-round.
Flower Color: Separate male and female flowers appear on the same plant, male spikes long and hanging with female spikes short. These insignificant catkin-like spikes can appear year-round, often emerging in shades of red to pink or sometimes green.
Size: Grows to 3 meters (10 ft) high and 2 meters (6 ft) across.
Toxicity: Considered mildly toxic to cats, dogs, and children if ingested.
Pruning: Prune in early spring, cutting stems back by up to half to 6–12 inches above the soil, and pinch tips every 2–3 weeks during the growing season for a bushier habit.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acalypha_wilkesiana.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/acalypha-wilkesiana/.; https://www.britannica.com/plant/copperleaf. https://www.south-florida-plant-guide.com/copper-plant.html.

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.

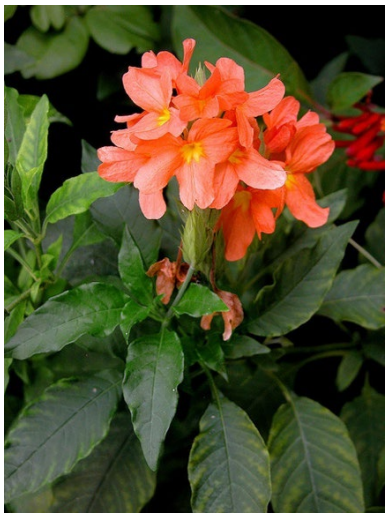
Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmos_bipinnatus; https://www.gardenia.net/guide/cosmos-plant-care-and-growing-guide; https://www.americanmeadows.com/product/wildflower-seeds/cosmos-seeds; https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23225286_Antioxidative_and_Antigenotoxic_Activity_of_Extracts_from_Cosmos_Cosmos_bipinnatus_Flowers

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/

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 "Frecracker 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/.;

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://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://easyplant.com/care/crown-of-thorns.;

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?srsltid=AfmBOop-zIfHwGtWDRWy1M0g7l1U1gDr2KYahLVsofD8Ph7LbwE-TnWe.; https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=277616&isprofile=0&.;https://www.centraltexasgardener.org/resource/dahlberg-daisy/.

DAYLILY (Various)
(*Hemerocallis* spp.)
Asphodelaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Asia, with a primary range covering China, Japan, Korea, southern Siberia, Mongolia, and northern India.
***Overview*:** They have been cultivated for thousands of years in East Asia—first appearing in Chinese texts around 656 A.D.—before being introduced to Europe in the 1500s and later to North America. The plants have been utilized for food and medicine in Asia for over 4,000 years.
General Characteristics and Care: Despite the common name, it is not taxonomically classified in the lily genus. Gardening enthusiasts and horticulturists have long bred *Hemerocallis* species for their attractive flowers; a select few species of the genus have edible petals, while some are extremely toxic. The plants are perennial, bulbous plants, whose common name alludes to its flowers, which typically last about a day. *It is not usually necessary to lift and store them for the winter. Propagate plants by division in the fall or spring.*
Zones: USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 3 through 9, with some varieties tolerating up to Zone 10.
Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: *Hemerocallis* (daylilies) are remarkably adaptable perennials, often called "forgiving" regarding soil conditions, but they perform best within a specific, slightly acidic to neutral range. Soil pH for *Hemerocallis* is 6.0 to 7.0 (slightly acidic to neutral).
Water: Require consistent moisture to thrive and produce maximum blooms. They are drought-tolerant once established due to their fleshy roots, but they need regular, deep watering in late spring and early summer.
Fertilizer: Require a balanced fertilizer (such as 10-10-10) applied in early spring and again after blooming to support growth and flowering.
Bloom Period: Generally bloom for three to six weeks between May and August.
Flower Color: Through extensive hybridization, colors now include reds, purples, lavenders, and near-white.
Size: Typically grow as clumps measuring 1–4 feet (30–120 cm) in height and width, with scapes (flower stalks) ranging from 15 inches to over 60 inches (1.2–5 ft) tall, depending on the cultivar.
Toxicity: Highly toxic to cats, causing severe acute kidney failure, which can be fatal within days if untreated.
Pruning: Deadhead spent flowers daily and cut scapes to the base once all blooms on a stalk finish to boost reblooming.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daylily.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/hemerocallis/.; https://www.gardenia.net/genus/hemerocallis-daylilies.; https://thegardeningcook.com/todays-garden-walk-june-20/.

DELPHINIUM ‘Diamond Blue’
(*Delphinium chinensis*)
Ranunculaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Delphinium 'Diamonds Blue' is a cultivated variety of the Chinese or Siberian delphinium, which originates from northeastern Asia, specifically regions within China, Mongolia, and Siberia.
***Overview*:** *Delphinium chinensis* is a compact, heat-tolerant, and highly vigorous hybrid perennial known for its intense, electric-blue flowers. This cold-hardy plant provides cool-season color, fine textured foliage, and striking blooms.
General Characteristics and Care: *Delphinium* produces upward-facing, spurless, cerulean blue flowers that appear on first-year plants, sure to win your admiration. With a shorter than typical stature and good branching habit, 'Diamonds Blue' is a great choice for the middle or front of perennial borders or in mixed container plantings.
Zones: USDA Zones 3 to 9.
Exposure: Delphiniums require full sun.
Soil: Delphinium requires rich, fertile, well-draining soil with a slightly acidic to neutral pH. To thrive, these plants need consistently moist, humus-rich soil as they are heavy feeders.
Water: It requires consistently moist, well-draining soil and moderate, regular watering.
Fertilizer: Apply a balanced, slow-release fertilizer in early spring, followed by a high-potassium or bloom-boosting fertilizer (e.g., 10-10-10 or 5-10-10) every 2–4 weeks during the growing season.
Bloom Period: Fall through spring.
Flower Color: This plant is renowned for its intense, electric, or cerulean blue flowers. These upward-facing, spurless blooms often have subtle violet overtones or a violet spot on each petal.
Size: Up to 16 inches tall, 10 to 12 inches wide.
Toxicity: They are highly poisonous to humans, pets, and livestock if ingested, potentially causing severe symptoms or death. All parts of the plant, especially young foliage, contain toxic diterpene alkaloids. Handling them can also cause severe skin irritation, requiring gloves.
Pruning: Deadhead spent flower spikes to encourage additional blooms. As a short-lived perennial, they are often treated as annuals or replaced every 2-3 years.

Sources: https://www.whiteflowerfarm.com/27443-product.html?srsltid=AfmBOopfN-h435syIJPlX9YBexKAE9t2hegjl2cHMVLz_qUc9IhrO2yb.; https://www.lsuagcenter.com/~/media/system/c/e/a/c/ceac73d780a9d8541b6a41e3bf9c2775/p3707y_superplantdiamondsbluedelphinium_rh323pdf.pdf.; https://www.lsuagcenter.com/articles/page1678982357979.

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 dianthuses 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: Dianthuses 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/.;

DIASCIA (Twin Spur) 'Blush White'
(*Diascia bergiana*)
Scrophulariaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to South Africa
***Overview*:** The two spurs found on the back of a *Diascia* flower (from which it gets the common name Twinspur) contain a special oil, which is collected in the wild by at least 8 species of bees of the genus *Rediviva*. The bees appear to have coevolved with the plants, as the females have developed unusually long, hairy forelegs with which they collect the oil from Diascia spurs to feed their larvae (and sometimes to line their nests).
General Characteristics and Care: Diascia cultivars have become extremely popular worldwide as bedding plants, suitable for hanging baskets, window boxes and other containers, as well as rockeries and the fronts of herbaceous borders. Diascia plants are esteemed for their profusion of small, tubular flowers that often bear a resemblance to miniature snapdragons. Diascia is generally resistant to pests, but occasional issues like aphids or spider mites may arise.
Zones: USDA Zones 9-11.
Exposure: Full to partial sun. While Diascia can tolerate some shade, it tends to bloom more prolifically in sunnier spots.
Soil: Diascia plants thrive in a slightly acidic to neutral soil pH range, ideally between 6.0 and 7.0. Well-draining, fertile soil is also crucial for their healthy growth.
Water: They prefer moderately moist soil and should be watered when the top inch of soil feels dry. Consistent moisture is needed, especially until the plant is established.
Fertilizer: Feed this plant with a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer every 4 to 6 weeks during the growing season.
Bloom Period: Diascia plants typically bloom from spring to fall, with some varieties exhibiting a longer bloom period extending into late October.
Flower Color: Common shades include pink, coral, and white, but you can also find varieties with orange, salmon, and even lavender or pinkish-red blooms.
Size: Most Diascia species reach no more than 30–45 centimeters (12–18 in) in height.
Toxicity: The plant is generally considered non-toxic to humans, cats, and dogs.
Pruning: To encourage bushier growth and prolong blooming, pinch back the tips of the stems when the plants are young. Deadheading, or removing spent flowers, promotes continuous flowering and maintains the plant's neat appearance.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diascia_(plant).; https://www.thespruce.com/trailing-flower-that-blooms-all-season-diascia-1402905.; https://www.martinnursery.com/diascia/.;

DICHONDRA ‘Silver Falls’
(*Dichondra argentea*)
Convolvulaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Texas and Mexico.
***Overview*:** A vigorous, fan-shaped, silver or grayfoliage on silver stems; very heat and drought tolerant. ‘Silver Falls’ dichondra is great alone or in mixed containers, providing a cool contrast to green foliage and brightly colored flowers. It will cascade down 3 to 6 feet in one season. The genus name comes from the Greek words *di* meaning two and *chondros* meaning lump in reference to the fruit having two capsules. The species name means silvered.
General Characteristics and Care: *Dichondra micrantha* is a low growing, groundcover plant that was once touted for use as a lawn in the mild west, but flea beetles quickly drove it out of favor as a grass substitute. Now a related species, *D. argentea*, is taking center stage nationwide as a unique, trailing accent plant for containers and hanging baskets. Dichondra has small, rounded leaves that resemble miniature water lily pads and spreads by rooting surface runners.
Zones: USDA Hardiness Zones: 9-11.
Exposure: Full to part sun.
Soil: The plant prefers well-drained soils. Soil drainage is particularly important if plants are grown as a ground cover. Prefers a soil pH of 5.5 to 6.5.
Water: Has low to moderate water needs and prefers to dry out slightly between waterings. It's drought-tolerant once established, making it a good choice for xeriscaping. Overwatering is more of a concern than underwatering, as it can lead to root rot.
Fertilizer: Use a fertilizer high in potassium and nitrogen; fertilize every two weeks during growing season.
Bloom Period: Primarily grown for foliage; leaves are gray, silver, and white. Flowers insignificant (very small). Flowers bloom in late spring (May to June).
Flower Color: Colors are white and yellow (more of a greenish-yellow).
Size: Height: 2" - 6"; Spread 18”-2’.
Toxicity: Generally considered non-toxic to pets and humans.
Pruning: *Dichondra argentea* can be pruned to maintain its shape and encourage a fuller, bushier growth habit. Pruning involves cutting back trailing foliage, especially any dead or damaged leaves, and removing growing tips.

Sources: https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/dichondra/silver-falls-dichondra-argentea.; https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/silver-falls-dichondra/.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/dichondra-argentea-silver-falls/.; https://www.gardendesign.com/plants/dichondra.html.

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/Cleretum_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)
(*Saggitaria 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://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, theleaves 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.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/foliage/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.

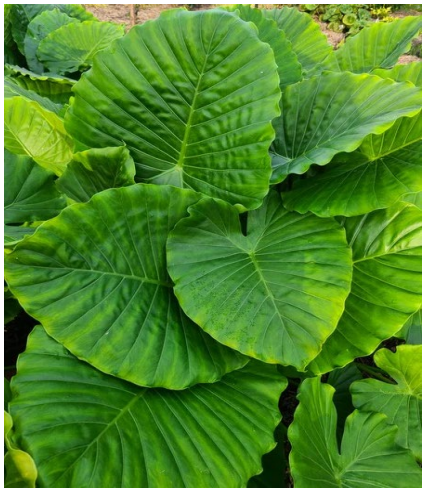
Sources: https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/bambusa-multiplex/.;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bambusa_multiplex.;
https://www.southernliving.com/garden/perennials/how-to-grow-bamboo.;

DWARF FOXTAIL (Chenille Plant)
(*Acalypha hispida*)
Euphorbiaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** The plant originated in tropical Asia, specifically Malesia and Papuasia, 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://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acalypha_hispida.; https://www.thespruce.com/chenille-plant-1315697.;

ELEPHANT EAR ‘California’
(*Allocasia california*)
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 california*. 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-gagaena-california.; http://www.therainforestgarden.com/2010/03/alocasia-california.html.; https://www.thespruce.com/grow-alocasia-indoors-1902735.

ELEPHANT EAR (Regal Shield)
(*Alocasia 'Regal Shield'*)
Araceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to tropical and subtropical regions of Southeast Asia and eastern Australia.
***Overview*:** Alocasia 'Regal Shield' is a captivating hybrid that merges the beauty of the tropics with a striking architectural form. The large, arrow-shaped leaves emerge from sturdy, upright stems, contributing to the plant's overall statuesque and regal demeanor—hence the name 'Regal Shield'. Around the world, many growers widely cultivate a range of hybrids and cultivars as ornamentals.
General Characteristics and Care: Alocasia 'Regal Shields' is a popular alocasia hybrid beloved for its large leaves and dramatic dark colors. It's a hybrid of *Alocasia ordora* and *Alocasia reginula* developed by LariAnn Gardner of Aroidia Research and patented in 2007.
The tops of its leaves are dark green and glossy, while the undersides are deep shades of purple with striking light green or white veining.
Zones: USDA hardiness zones 9-11.
Exposure: Partial sun to shade.
Soil: Moist but well-drained loam; Acid to neutral pH, ideally between 5.5 and 7.0.
Water: Prefers consistently moist, but not soggy, soil.
Fertilizer:
Bloom Period: Spring, summer. Grown primarily for its showy, dark green leaves with thick, raised white veining that gives a "skeleton-like" appearance to the plant.
Flower Color: Not grown for its flowers, which it can produce, though they are not a frequent occurrence. These flowers are typically a light green spike surrounded by a creamy spathe
Size: Height: 4-6', Width: 4'-5'.
Toxicity: As a part of the *araceae* family, Regal Shields is also considered mildly toxic to humans and pets if ingested.
Pruning: Pruning Alocasia 'Regal Shield' involves removing dead, yellowing, or damaged leaves to encourage new growth and maintain its shape. Pruning is best done in late winter or early spring before new growth begins, but can also be done as needed throughout the year.

Sources: https://www.gardenia.net/plant/alocasia-regal-shield-elephant-ear.; https://www.thespruce.com/alocasia-regal-shield-care-guide-5521625.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alocasia.

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-1-d&q=fan+flower+toxicity.;

FERN ‘Autumn’
(*Dryopteris erythrosora*)
Dryopteridaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to China, Japan, Korea, Nansei-shoto, and Taiwan.
***Overview*:** A stunning dwarf fern with a flush of young papery fronds that emerge a copper-red color, then mature to a deep green. Spreads by underground stems. An herbaceous perennial.
General Characteristics and Care: Tolerates drought once established. Use for ground cover, borders, edges, accents, large planting in shade gardens and woodland gardens. Low maintenance; it is generally deer and rabbit-resistant.
Zones: USDA zones 4–9, though it is most commonly rated for zones 5–9.
Exposure: Full Shade to part-sun.
Soil: Thrives in consistently moist, well-drained, acidic to neutral soil (pH 5.5-7.0) that is rich in organic matter. It adapts to various soil types, including loam, sand, and clay, but requires good drainage to avoid waterlogging.
Water: Requires consistently moist, well-drained soil, especially during the first growing season. Adapts to dry soil once established.
Fertilizer: Requires minimal fertilization, thriving best with a light feeding of balanced fertilizer (such as 10-10-10 or 20-20-20) in early spring to support new, copper-toned growth.
Bloom Period: Non-flowering.
Flower Color: Non-flowering.
Size: Height: 20 - 24 Inches (51cm - 61cm); Spread: 20 - 24 Inches (51cm - 61cm).
Toxicity: Considered non-toxic to humans, cats, dogs, and other pets**.**
Pruning: Best pruned in late winter or early spring just before new growth emerges. Cut old, tattered fronds down to about 1-2 inches above the crown to make room for new, vibrant foliage. While evergreen in warm climates, removing old foliage ensures a tidy, healthy, and vigorous plant.

Sources: https://www.monrovia.com/autumn-fern.html?srsltid=AfmBOorqQaZa9CmDSA2dgVDSVUiBz_XFF9r-69dWDbSLlWxhPtNkYqJV.; https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/dryopteris/brilliance-autumn-fern-dryopteris-erythrosora.; https://www.classic-groundcovers.com/plant-name/Dryopteris-erythrosora-Autumn-Fern.

FERN ‘Blue Star’
(*Phlebodium aureum*)
Polypodiaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to South America.
***Overview*:** Blue star fern, also called golden polypody (many footed) and cabbage palm fern, is known for its elongated, multi-lobed fronds and pleasant blue-green color. It produces distinctly ruffled, scalloped, arching fronds that form a full, robust clump. The evergreen leaves emerge light green and develop a powdery blue-green patina as they age. Yellow-orange spore cases decorate the undersides of the fronds. Like most rabbit's foot ferns, this plant is an epiphyte with a creeping habit. Furry rhizomes branch out from the base and produce new leaves.
General Characteristics and Care: These epiphytic ferns thrive in bright, indirect light and consistently moist, well-draining soil. They are relatively adaptable and can be grown both indoors and outdoors in suitable climates.
Zones: USDA Hardiness Zones 8a-13b.
Exposure: As with other ferns, the Blue Star can tolerate low light levels, however it will thrive in medium light levels with a decent amount of indirect light, with no direct sunlight shining onto the plant.
Soil: These plants are epiphytes and so grow in trees nestled in branches and debris. If planted in soil, it should be of very loose composition. Like most ferns, they prefer slightly acidic soil with a pH between 5.5 and 6.5.
Water: This fern likes to be kept moist. The Blue Star Fern will not like to be dry. The soil should be kept moist but not soggy.
Fertilizer: Fertilize lightly during spring and summer with a balanced fertilizer.
Bloom Period: Grown for their foliage.
Flower Color: None.
Size: This fern may reach a mature height of 2-4 feet (60-120 cm) and a spread of 3-6 feet (90-180 cm).
Toxicity: Blue Star Ferns are not known to be toxic, so are safe to have around pets and children.
Pruning: Blue star fern can occasionally benefit from pruning, especially if it has a lot of leggy growth or browning fronds, but pruning is not necessary.

Sources: https://www.greenroomsmarket.com/blog/2021/2/22/plant-profile-blue-star-fern.; https://www.thespruce.com/blue-star-fern-care-7553051.; https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/phlebodium/living-lace-davana-blue-star-davana-phlebodium-aureum.;

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://westernstarnurseries.com/plants/asparagus-densiflorus-meyeri/.;https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asparagus_densiflorus.;

FERN ‘Holly’(Japanese Holly Fern)
(*Cyrtomium falcatun ‘Rochfordianum’*)
Dryopteridaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to eastern Asia, India, and possibly southern Africa and Hawaii.
***Overview*:** Popular for its hardiness and handsome foliage, this fern makes an excellent groundcover or border edging in shaded locations. The stiff, glossy, dark green fronds of holly-like leaflets with coarsely fringed margins add excellent texture to container plantings. Evergreen in mild winter regions like Florida. This species of *Cyrtomium* is the easiest of the genus to grow being less fussy about constantly even moisture and actually prospers in summer warmth.
General Characteristics and Care: This fern can tolerate coastal exposure and is deer and rabbit resistant. This unique fern is an excellent potted specimen. It grows in shaded niches in rock gardens and on the north side of buildings. Thicker than other ferns, it stands up to coastal breezes without tattering. Above all, it is among the few that survive well with salt air or saline water supply.
Zones: USDA Hardiness zones 6-10.
Exposure: Full shade, partial shade.
Soil: Best with fertile, evenly moist, well-drained soil. Water deeply, regularly in first growing season to establish an extensive root system. This fern prefers a slightly acidic to neutral soil pH, ideally between 5.0 and 7.0. Some sources specify a slightly narrower range of 6.0 to 7.0. It can tolerate a pH of up to 7.8.
Water: Water when soil is dry to the touch.
Fertilizer: For best results use a balanced liquid fertilizer, such as a 10-10-10 N-P-K formula, applied at half the recommended strength during the growing season (spring through fall).
Bloom Period: No blooms. A foliage plant.
Flower Color: N/A.
Size: Forms vase-shaped clump 18 to 24 in. tall, 24 to 36 in. wide.
Toxicity: Non-toxic to humans, cats, and dogs.
Pruning: Remove old, faded fronds after new growth begins in spring. Leaving old fronds in place during winter months will help protect the plant from the cold.

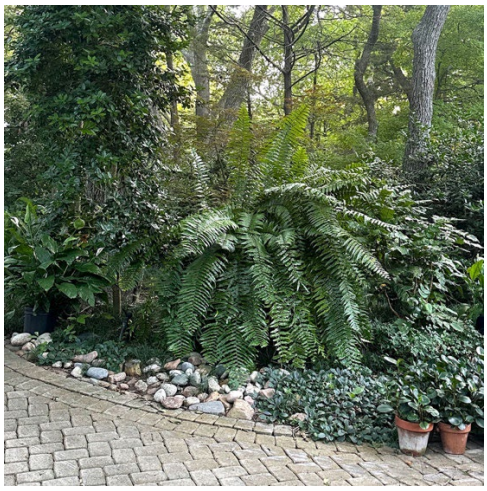
Sources: https://www.monrovia.com/japanese-holly-fern.html?srsltid=AfmBOoq6jqhmu2gq9PWQtLp9CV-AOA11UsdEvSKdCiiGnsRxhpQrO_XD.; https://www.fancyfrondsnursery.com/ferns/rochfords-holly-fern-cyrtomium-falcatum-rochfordianum.; https://www.bhg.com/gardening/plant-dictionary/perennial/japanese-holly-fern/.

FERN ‘Kangaroo Paw’
(*Microsorum diversifolium*)
Polypodiaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to the temperate regions of Australia, particularly the Southeast, and New Zealand.
***Overview*:** It is an epiphyte or ground-creeping fern, often found in rocky areas, and thrives in high-humidity, shaded environments. This fern gets its name from the tips of its silvery green fronds, which resemble a kangaroo's paw footprint in shape.
General Characteristics and Care: This Australian fern grows long, indented leaves with a dark green color and glossy shine. It has distinctive fuzzy or hairy, dark green to brown creeping rhizomes. These thick, root-like structures grow along or just above the surface of the soil. Versatile and adaptable, Kangaroo ferns are suitable for any warm environment. Care is similar to most other ferns, preferring indirect light and moisture.
Zones: USDA zones 9-10.
Exposure: Shade to partial sun.
Soil: Moist, well-drained soil. Likes a slightly acidic to neutral soil, with an ideal pH range of 5.6 to 6.5**.**
Water: Thrives on consistent moisture, requiring thorough watering when the top inch of soil feels dry, but it is more drought-tolerant than many ferns. Water directly onto the soil, avoiding the fuzzy rhizomes to prevent rot, and ensure excellent drainage to avoid waterlogging.
Fertilizer: They are light feeders that thrive with balanced liquid fertilizer applied every 4–6 weeks during spring and summer. Dilute the fertilizer to half-strength to avoid root burn, and avoid feeding in fall and winter when growth slows.
Bloom Period: Non-flowering. Grown for its leaves and fuzzy rhizomes.
Flower Color: N/A.
Size: Grows to 12 inches tall and 4 feet wide.
Toxicity: Kangaroo paw fern is non-toxic to cats, dogs, and humans,
Pruning: This fern requires minimal pruning, mainly focusing on removing dead, damaged, or yellowing fronds at the base.

Sources: https://www.thespruce.com/kangaroo-paw-fern-care-guide-8641167.; https://mountaincrestgardens.com/fern-kangaroo-paw/?srsltid=AfmBOoq1DjGWt56elftdhtV7wth1yLAqEO2z7AHkyAruS7hv8EZNQ0Lb.; https://www.healthyhouseplants.com/indoor-houseplants/kangaroo-paw-fern-microsorum-diversifolium-care-guide/.

FERN 'Macho'
(*Nephrolepsis biserrata*)
Polypodiaceae



***Geographical Origin*:** The Macho Fern, also known as the giant sword fern, is native to tropical and subtropical regions across the globe. Its native habitats include Florida, Mexico, the West Indies, Central and South America, Africa, and Southeast Asia.
***Overview*:** The Macho Fern is a large, tropical, shade-loving perennial known for its massive fronds and broad, lush appearance. Ideal for shady, humid porches, patios, or large indoor spaces, it requires consistently moist soil and protection from direct afternoon sun and frost.
General Characteristics and Care: Larger and fuller than Boston or Kimberly ferns, this variety creates dramatic greenery indoors or outdoors. It is relatively low-maintenance, requiring shade, rich soil, and high humidity to thrive. Fast-growing in favorable conditions. Excellent in hanging baskets, large containers, or as a focal point in a shaded landscape. Generally pest-resistant, but can be affected by spider mites or scale. Treat with neem oil or soap solutions if necessary.
Zones: USDA Zones 10-12.
Exposure: Needs shade. But can take some morning sun.
Soil: Use airy, acidic soil for macho ferns; avoid heavy soil for this fern.
Water: This fern requires high humidity and moist soil. Increase watering during heat, reduce during cooler months
Fertilizer: Moderate feeders that benefit from a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer (such as 10-10-10 or 20-20-20) diluted to half-strength, applied monthly during the growing season (spring through summer).
Bloom Period: N/A
Flower Color: N/A
Size: Fronds can grow 3-4 feet long, with a total spread of up to 6 feet.
Toxicity: Non-toxic to cats, dogs, and humans.
Pruning: Prune brown or yellowing fronds at the base. If the plant becomes too dry and looks unhealthy, you can cut it back to 2 inches, and it will often regenerate.

Sources: https://www.thespruce.com/macho-fern-growing-guide-5194295.; https://tropicalplantsofflorida.com/pages/macho-fern-care?srsltid=AfmBOorGHFuaeXpzKDR2rq7iuCqNSpOQ3aAhj1qowtVV3JIQCKKPQo6L.; https://neilsperry.com/2025/06/mucho-to-love-with-macho/.

FERN ‘Rabbit’s Foot’
(*Davallia fejeensis*)
Davalliaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Originates primarily from the Fiji Islands and other areas of Micronesia in the South Pacific. While *D. fejeensis* is from Fiji, other species considered "rabbit foot ferns" can be native to Africa, Asia, and Australia.
***Overview*:** Known for its furry, brown *rhizomes* that mimic a rabbit's foot. It can be epiphytic (growing on trees) or lithophytic (growing on rocks). The plant's distinctive "furry feet" are actually creeping rhizomes covered in soft hairs. In the wild, these help the plant anchor itself to trees and store moisture.
General Characteristics and Care: It is a tropical, epiphytic fern that thrives in high-humidity climates, growing on trees and in rock crevices. It is often found in shady, moist, tropical forest habitats. This fern is more tolerant of low humidity than other ferns but looks better when grown in high humidity. No significant problems, but monitor for common pests such as spider mites, mealybugs, and scale insects. Displaying them in hanging baskets or shallow pots emphasizes their unique, cascading rhizomes.
Zones: It is hardy outside in USDA zones 10-12.
Exposure: It thrives in bright, indirect light.
Soil: Require a light, airy, and well-draining potting medium that remains consistently moist but never waterlogged. An ideal mix consists of peat moss or coco coir for moisture retention, combined with perlite or bark for aeration and drainage. The pH should be slightly acidic.
Water: They prefer consistent, light moisture—not soggy soil—and require excellent drainage to prevent root rot.
Fertilizer: Provide a light, consistent feeding during their active growing season (spring to summer), typically once a month with a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer diluted to half or quarter strength. Avoid fertilizing in fall and winter when growth slows.
Bloom Period: N/A
Flower Color: N/A
Size: Typically grows 1 to 3 feet tall and 1 to 4 feet wide at maturity.
Toxicity: The rabbit's foot fern is non-toxic to humans and pets.
Pruning: Remove yellow, brown, or damaged fronds at the base to maintain health. Trim overgrown or unruly rhizomes.

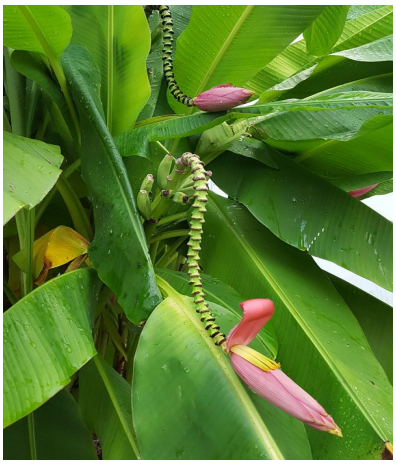
Sources: https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/davallia-solida-var-fejeensis/.;https://www.thespruce.com/grow-davallia-species-indoors-1902720.; https://www.houseplantjournal.com/rabbit-foot-fern-care/.

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.monstera-app.com/en/plants/varieties/billbergia-pyramidalis-01HX97RXNBGKNV9HFR5R9S7C29#:~:text=Despite%20its%20nickname%20of%20%22flaming,on%20contact%20or%20if%20ingested.

FLOWERING BANANA
(*Musa ornata*)
Musaceae



***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Southeast Asia, specifically in the eastern Himalayan foothills, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Northeast India.
***Overview*:** Thriving in monsoon climates, it is now widely cultivated in tropical regions for ornamental use. The flowering banana is one of more than 50 species of banana in the genus *Musa* of the family Musaceae. Flowering banana is rhizomatous with a suckering habit. After flowering and fruiting, the pseudostem formed by the leaves dies, but the roots push out suckers that form a new pseudostem.
General Characteristics and Care: From its home in India, it reached Central and South America early in the 19th century where it became naturalized. *M. ornata* is not an especially variable plant in itself but it hybridizes freely with other species. The result is that there are a number of hybrids derived from it in the tropical regions of America. Flowering Banana is a known for its striking upright pink, lavender, or yellow bracts and inedible, decorative fruit.
Zones: USDA zones 9–11.
Exposure: Full sun to bright, part shade.
Soil: Requires rich, fertile, and well-draining soil that remains consistently moist but not waterlogged. Ideal soil is loamy with high organic matter, a slightly acidic to neutral pH (5.5-7.0) and good aeration to prevent root rot.
Water: They need frequent, deep watering—roughly 2-3 times a week during the growing season—and prefer high humidity (60–70%).
Fertilizer: A heavy feeder that requires consistent fertilization during its active growing season (spring and summer) to support rapid growth, requiring a balanced, high-potassium fertilizer (NPK 10-10-10 or 8-10-8) every 2–4 weeks. They thrive with additional potassium and magnesium.
Bloom Period: Blooms primarily during the summer and fall, though in optimal, warm conditions, it can flower from spring through fall.
Flower Color: It produces large paddle-shaped leaves and orange-yellow flowers with pinkish bracts that grow into small, 3-inch fruit.
Size: Has a height of 9 feet with a 7-foot spread.
Toxicity: Non-toxic to humans, cats, dogs, and horses.
Pruning: Requires light pruning to maintain health and aesthetics, preferably in early spring.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Musa_ornata.; https://www.gardenia.net/plant/musa-ornata.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/musa-ornata/.;https://chlorobase.com/gb/plants/musa/ornata.

GAILLARDIA ‘Copper Sun’(Blanket Flower)
(*Gaillaridia 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-aristata/#:~:text=Blanketflower%20is%20a%20flowering%20plant,is%20covered%20with%20fuzzy%20hairs.

GARDENIA ‘Radicons Dwarf’
(*Gardenia augusta ‘Radicons’*)
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.

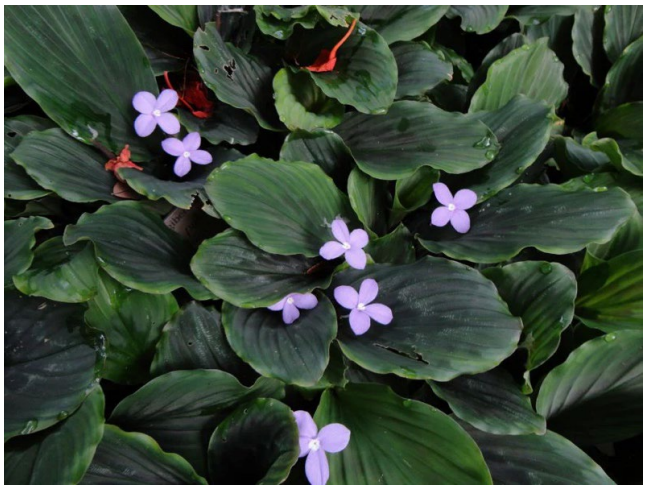
Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelargonium; https://www.gardensbythebay.com.sg/en/learn-with-us/explore-resources/whats-blooming/garden-geranium.html; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/pelargonium/; https://www.gardenia.net/genus/pelargonium-geranium

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

GINGER 'Peacock'
(*Kaempferia pulchra [elegans]*)
Zingiberaceae



***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Southeast Asia.
***Overview*:** These gingers grow from small globular rhizomes which grow fleshy roots. Most are low growing plants with colorfully marked foliage. Most species naturally go dormant for a portion of the year. Many species published as *Kaempferia* have over the years been transferred to the genera *Boesenbergia*, *Scaphoclamys*, *Siphonochilus*, and others. Of the cultivated species, many are new to science. The genus has had little attention until recently and new species are finally being published. There are at least a dozen undescribed species grown by collectors in the US alone.
General Characteristics and Care: Peacock ginger is a low-growing and slow-spreading species with attractively patterned leaves. *Kaempferia pulchra* is by far the easiest and most rewarding Peacock Ginger. Fortunately, it is highly variable in the wild and numerous patterns and sizes exist. *Plants outdoors will die back in winter and completely disappear.*
Zones: USDA hardiness zones 8 through 11.
Exposure: This species prefers light to moderate shade.
Soil: Peacock Ginger thrives in well-drained soil rich in organic matter, ideally with a slightly acidic to neutral pH (6.5-7.0). It can, however, tolerate slightly alkaline soils.
Water: Keep moist in Summer and dry in Winter.
Fertilizer: For Peacock Ginger, a balanced fertilizer with equal parts nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium is recommended during the growing season (spring to fall). Fertilize every two weeks with a diluted solution, applied to the soil, avoiding contact with leaves or stems. During the dormant period (typically winter), avoid fertilizing.
Bloom Period: Flowers either emerge in the spring just prior to the foliage or with the foliage and continue through the summer.
Flower Color: Light purple; lavender.
Size: Peacock Ginger typically grows to be 6-12 inches (15-30 cm) tall and spreads 9-12 inches (23-30 cm) wide.
Toxicity: Generally considered non-toxic to pets, including dogs and cats.
Pruning: Pruning Kaempferia pulchra, also known as peacock ginger, is generally minimal and primarily involves removing dead or damaged leaves.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaempferia_elegans.;
https://www.pacificbulbsociety.org/pbswiki/index.php/Kaempferia.;
https://gingerwoodnursery.com/product/kaempferia-pulchra-all-summer-silver/.;
https://www.bambooland.com.au/kaempferia-elegans.

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.

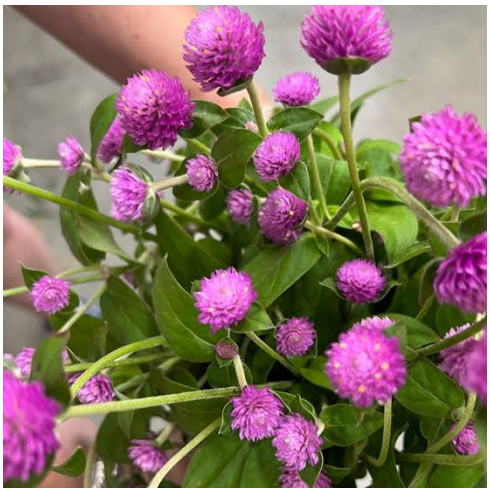
Sources: https://gingerwoodnursery.com/product-category/gingers/curcuma-gingers/tulip-gingers-siam-tulips.; https://greg.app/plant-care/curcuma-siam-splash-siam-tulip.; https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/ornamental/bulbs/siam-tulip/growing-siam-tulips.htm.;

GOLDEN TRUMPET TREE
(*Handroanthus chrysotrichus*)
Bignoniaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Brazil.
***Overview*:** *Handroanthus chrysotrichus*, synonym *Tabebuia chrysotricha*, commonly known as the Golden Trumpet tTree, 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
(G*omphrena* 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.

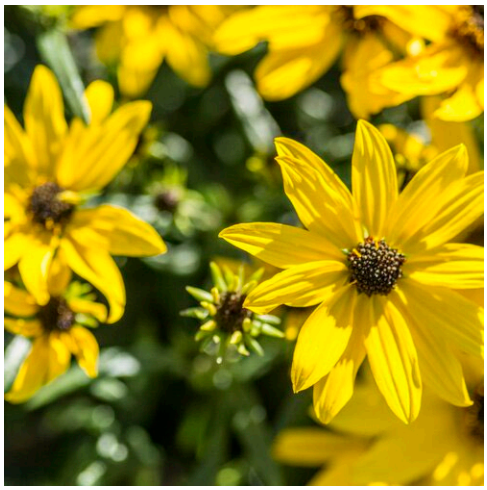
Sources: https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=cordyline+fruticosa.; https://www.planetnatural.com/cordyline/.;https://www.thespruce.com/grow-cordyline-indoors-1902747.;

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.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/help-for-the-home-gardener/sustainable-gardening.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helenium_amarum.;

HELIANTHUS ‘Autumn Gold’
(*Helianthus* spp.)
Asteraceae



***Geographical Origin*:** Native to North America.
***Overview*:** Helianthus, commonly known as sunflowers, has a variety of uses including food, oil production, cosmetics, and even phytoremediation. The seeds are a source of edible oil and can be eaten raw or roasted. The oil is also used in cosmetics and personal care products for its moisturizing and antioxidant properties. Additionally, sunflowers can be used to extract pollutants from soil, as their roots absorb heavy metals.
General Characteristics and Care: Sunflowers prefer a sunny location that gets at least six hours of sun per day and well-drained soil. They don't like to compete with weeds, so keep the garden clean. Wildlife is often attracted to sunflower seedlings, so it's best to protect seedlings with row covers or screening, removing the cover once the plants are about one foot tall.
Zones: USDA zones 5-10.
Exposure: Needs full sun.
Soil: Likes sandy to clay soils. Sunflowers generally prefer a slightly acidic to neutral soil pH, typically between 6.0 and 7.0. They can tolerate a range of pH levels, but this range is considered optimal for their growth and development.
Water: Needs consistently moist but well-drained soil.
Fertilizer: Sunflowers do not need a lot of fertilizer, and over-fertilizing can be harmful to the plant. A light application of a balanced fertilizer in the spring can help to promote growth. Avoid high-nitrogen fertilizers, which can encourage leafy growth at the expense of flower production.
Bloom Period: Late spring, summer, fall.
Flower Color: Bright yellow/gold.
Size: Height 24-26”; width 20-24”.
Toxicity: Sunflowers are generally not toxic to humans or pets. However, they can be allelopathic, meaning they exude chemicals that can negatively affect the growth of some nearby plants.
Pruning: Trim in the spring before new growth emerges.

Sources: https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/helianthus/autumn-gold-narrow-leaved-sunflower-helianthus-salicifolius.; https://www.thespruce.com/growing-sunflowers-1402916.; https://www.gardenia.net/plant/helianthus-annuus.

HELIOTROPE (‘Aromagica Purple’)
(*Heliotropium aborescens*)
Boraginaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru.
***Overview*:** it is a bushy, evergreen, short-lived shrub with dense clusters of bright purple flowers, notable for their intense, vanilla-like fragrance. Like many borage plants, the vanilla flower also contains poisonous pyrrolizidine alkaloids in addition to the fragrances. During the Victorian era in England this plant gained great recognition, often appearing in gardens and the herbaceous borders of parks. A vanilla-scented heliotrope was laid on the coffin of the American poet Emily Dickinson.
General Characteristics and Care: Plant in patio pots, window boxes and landscapes where the fragrant, rich purple blooms will attract pollinators and hummingbirds all season long. While others can look tired and sparse by midseason, Aromagica Purple heliotrope remains full and covered in large, fragrant, purple blossoms.
Zones: USDA Zones 10-11.
Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: A slightly acidic to neutral soil pH, ideally between 6.0 and 7.0, is recommended for optimal growth and vibrant purple flower color.
Water: Keep the soil moist but not over wet.
Fertilizer: To encourage healthy growth and abundant blooms, use a fertilizer that is either balanced N-P-K or high in phosphorus.
Bloom Period: Purple continues to produce its vibrant blooms and keep its fullness all throughout the summer.
Flower Color: Rich purple.
Size: Height: 18" - 2'6"; Spread: 16" - 20".
Toxicity: Heliotrope plants, including the Aromagica Purple variety, are toxic to both humans and animals if ingested. All parts of the plant, including the flowers, are poisonous. The toxicity is due to the presence of alkaloids, which can cause liver damage and other health problems.
Pruning: Deadheading will encourage more flowers to form. Pinching back young plants promotes bushier growth. Additionally, you can prune back leggy stems and remove yellowing or diseased leaves to rejuvenate the plant.

Sources: https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/heliotropium/aromagica-purple-heliotrope-heliotropium-arborescens.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heliotropium_arborescens.; https://www.gardencrossings.com/product/aromagica-purple-heliotropium/?srsltid=AfmBOoruxU9OIaF3INeZSQF8Wlrs8n48FmZ1zOx8OUcT-WXTr5-4dXjE.

HELLEBORE ‘Carlotta’
(*Helleborus orientalis ‘Carlotta’*)
Ranunculaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to the woodlands and mountainous areas of Northeastern Greece, Turkey, and the Caucasus region.
***Overview*:** Hellebore is a tough, low-maintenance, evergreen herbaceous perennial, perfect for shade gardens, producing nodding, cup-shaped flowers. The genus name, *Helleborus*, comes from the Greek words *helein*, meaning injures, and *bora*, meaning food, referring to the toxic properties of the leaves, stems, and roots, if they are ingested. The specific epithet, *orientalis*, means from the Orient.
General Characteristics and Care: This beautiful harbinger of spring has interesting flowers and large, dark green leaves. Use this plant in a border front, on patios, in containers, or in other protected, shady spots, such as a woodland garden. Pollinators will benefit from the nectar of these early-blooming flowers.
Zones: USDA Zones 4 to 9.
Exposure: They will do best where they receive partial sunlight or shade. They are intolerant of bright sun and high temperatures but are resistant to damage by deer browsing.
Soil: They prefer high organic matter soils that are moist and in a shaded location. Thrives in soil with a neutral to slightly alkaline pH, ideally ranging from 6.5 to 8.0**.**
Water: They need regular, deep watering to establish, particularly in their first year. Avoid waterlogged soil and overwatering, as this can lead to "black death" or root rot.
Fertilizer: Thrive with light, bi-annual fertilization using a balanced, slow-release fertilizer applied in early spring and again in early fall. Avoid high-nitrogen fertilizers.
Bloom Period: Blooms appear in late winter and persist into spring.
Flower Color: They appear in clusters of 1 to 4 blooms in colors varying from white, and pink, to light rose, and rise above the foliage on a thick stem.
Size: Mature plants can form clumps that are 18” to 24” tall and 24” to 30” wide.
Toxicity: They are highly toxic to humans and animals. All parts of the plant contain toxic cardiac glycosides and protoanemonin, which can cause severe vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, slowed heart rate, and potential death if ingested.
Pruning: Prune in late winter to early spring (Jan–April) by cutting old, tattered, or diseased leaves to the ground before new flower stalks fully emerge.

Sources: https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/helleborus-orientalis/.; https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/lenten-rose-helleborus-xhybridus/.;https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/hort-home-landscape/2016-03-28-plant-week-helleborus

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://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 crammed 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://miraclegro.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://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.

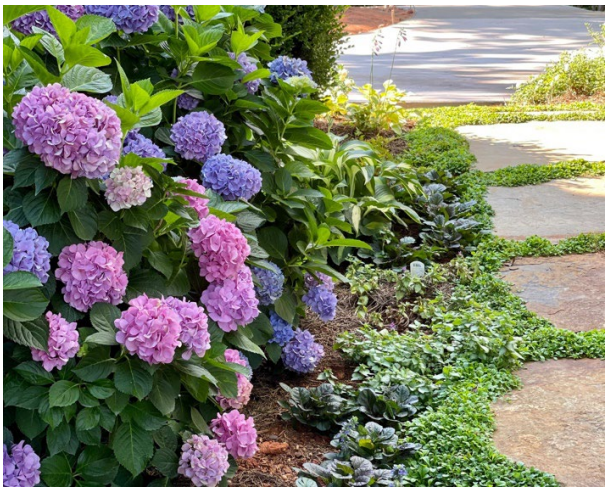
Sources: https://www.thespruce.com/horsetail-plant-aggressively-spreading-weed-4125786.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equisetum.;

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/.; https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=Sun+Hosta+blooming+period.; https://www.plantdelights.com/products/hosta-sun-flower?srsltid=AfmBOooP1g7bHhhIvLyiOtsXqNDMMHG7Re0QIUwuAS483P2qdjSdbibz.; https://www.provenwinners.com/learn/hosta.

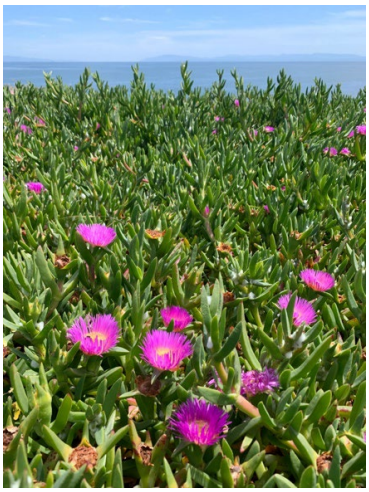
HYDRANGEA 'Endless Summer'
(*Hydrangea macrophylla*)
Hydrangeaceae



***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'
(*Carpobrutus* 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=l.; 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=wArXntmlKsXl9M&vssid=l.; https://yardandgarden.extension.iastate.edu. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impatiens.;

IRESINE ‘Bloodleaf’

(*Iresine herbstii*)

Amaranthaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Brazil.
***Overview*:** Its leaves make it a popular ornamental plant. There are many varieties whose leaves or most parts of the plant are green, red or purple. For example, *Iresine herbstii aureoreticulata* is green, but mixed colors are also possible. It is often found in gardens, but it cannot tolerate cold and is kept cool in the home or greenhouse over the winter. It is therefore most seen as a potted plant for the windowsill. If *Iresine herbstii* suffers from drought, it can react much more sensitively than other plants and become extremely limp, but it regains its turgor pressure as soon as it has water available again.
General Characteristics and Care: Blood leaf, also commonly known as Chicken gizzard, and Beefsteak Plant, is an uncommon shrub with striking foliage that makes it a gorgeous addition indoors or outdoors. It can be easily propagated by cuttings. It also quickly takes root in a glass of water (not only at the node, but at various points on the stem). It is often cultivated as an annual and repeatedly re-grown.
Zones: USDA Zones 10-12.
Exposure: Likes full sunt to partial shade. Iresine bright leaves will become less colorful and greener if kept in a shadier spot. The brighter the light, the more vibrant the foliage will be.
Soil: Prefers loamy, well-draining soil with a neutral (7.0) pH.
Water: It’s best to water them when the top half of the soil has dried out. Sticking your finger about ½ inch into the soil is a simple way to check this. If it feels dry, it's time to water. The soil of your Iresine should stay a little moist, don't let it dry out completely.
Fertilizer: Apply fertilizer every 4-6 weeks during the growing season (spring to summer). Use a fertilizer with an N-P-K ratio of 10-10-10.
Bloom Period: Spring through late summer. The exact bloom period can vary slightly depending on the specific species and variety.
Flower Color: The flowers are unremarkable, consisting of small greenish or white flowers on small stems, but instead are grown for the crimson leaves.
Size: This plant grows 12-18 in. tall with a 3’ spread.
Toxicity: *Iresine herbstii* is generally considered non-toxic to humans and pets. However, the sap can cause mild skin irritation, especially in children, if they come into contact with it.
Pruning: Bloodleaf benefits from regular fertilization and pruning to maintain a bushy shape.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iresine_herbstii.; https://www.thespruce.com/grow-blood-leaf-indoors-1902571.; https://plnts.com/en/care/houseplants-family/iresine.

IRIS ‘Apostle Walking’
(*Iris Neomarica caerulea 'Regina'*)
Iridaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Brazil.
***Overview*:** This plant gets perhaps its most common name, “Walking iIis” 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-leafed 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.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?srsltid=AfmBOoovJV-dml-kIroM4guH6sTgI8qS2D9nn8aXjOegoTnzsOinauYn.;
https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/ixora/.;

JAPANESE HOLLY ‘Dwarf’
(*Ilex crenata* ‘compacta’)
Aquifoliaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Japan and East Asia.
***Overview*:** *Ilex crenata* ‘compacta’ is a low, compact version of Japanese Holly known for its small black fruit, rich dark green foliage, and spreading habit. It has a dense branching pattern and a moderate rate of growth. Many gardeners enjoy using it as a lush hedge or border, or to create topiaries.
General Characteristics and Care: The shrub generally features rounded, glossy, dark green leaves that are only a little more than an inch long. It sports small, green or white, four-petaled flowers in the late spring that tend to attract bees and other pollinators. It’s important to plant Japanese Holly in a site that has good soil drainage and some protection from the elements, especially bitter winds. Once mature, the shrub typically needs feeding only once a year but can benefit from the addition of compost and mulch. The plant doesn’t need a lot of pruning unless you’re aiming to train it in a particular shape, such as a curving topiary.
Zones: USDA zones 6-8.
Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Tolerant of poor, sandy soil but prefers clay. Can tolerate and grow in a range of pH levels from acidic to alkaline (pH < 6 up to 8).
Water: The shrub typically needs watering only during dry spells.
Fertilizer: Apply fertilizer in the spring as new growth begins. A balanced, slow-release fertilizer is recommended. Look for an N-P-K ratio of 10-10-10 for regular feeding or 10-20-20 when you need to boost root strength, prepare the plant for winter, or encourage flowering and berry production.
Bloom Period: Spring.
Flower Color: Green, white.
Size: Height can reach 6-8 ft; width ranges from 6-10 ft.
Toxicity: Exercise caution. Human ingestion of berries can cause minor toxic reactions.
Pruning: Late winter or early spring to maintain shape or rejuvenate the plant.

Sources: https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/ilex-crenata-compacta/?form=MG0AV3; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/ilexcrenata/#:~:text=This%20holly%20is%20a%20native,the%20edges%20of%20the%20leaves; https://www.thespruce.com/sky-pencil-holly2132077#:~:text=Japanese%20holly%20shrubs%20don't,grow%20and%20reform%20the%20shrub; https://johnson-nursery.com/ilex-compacta-japanese-holly/.

KALANCHOE ‘Red Lips”
(*Kalanchoe thrysiflora*)
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 thyrsiflo*ra 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+thrysifloa#vhid=wgmcgDZF-RqQ1M&vssid=l.; https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/flapjacks-kalanchoe-spp/.;

KNOCK-OUT ROSE (Various)
(*Rosa* 'Knock-Out; 'RADrazz', etc.)
Rosaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Knock Out® roses originated in the United States.
***Overview*:** The success of the original 'RADrazz' led to a series of Knock Out® roses with different, patented, scientific names. *Rosa* 'Knock Out', (aka RADrazz), is a shrub rose cultivar bred by American rose grower William Radler in his Milwaukee, Wisconsin basement in 1989, and introduced into the United States by Star Roses and Plants in 2000. "The rose was special, a dense bush full of pinkish-red blooms. No need to prune. Dead flowers just fell off. No need to spray. The rose appeared immune to diseases such as black spot mildew." It was named an All-America Rose Selections winner in 2000.
General Characteristics and Care: They attract butterflies, take little care, and are good in urban environments. Like all roses, they are thorny. Knock Out roses transformed the image of roses from a high-maintenance plant only "rose people" could grow into a plant all of us could grow.
Zones: The plant thrives in USDA zones 4 and warmer.
Exposure: They need at least 6 hours of full sun to bloom properly.
Soil: Best grown in medium moisture, slightly acidic soil with a pH level of 5.5 to 6.5, and in well-drained garden loams.
Water: Water deeply and regularly. Avoid overhead watering--subject to mildew.
Fertilizer: For robust growth and continuous blooming, Knock Out roses respond best to a balanced, slow-release fertilizer (such as 10-10-10) or specialized rose food applied in early spring and again after the first bloom cycle.
Bloom Period: Knock Out roses are renowned for their near-continuous blooming from spring through the first hard frost in late autumn. They typically produce 5–7 distinct, high-intensity flowering cycles roughly every 5–6 weeks, blooming regardless of whether the plant is deadheaded.
Flower Color: They come in double or single-petal varieties, and bloom in a range of colors including coral, yellow, pink and white as well as red.
Size: 'Knock Out' is a medium, bushy shrub, 2 to 4 ft in height with a 3 to 4 ft spread.
Toxicity: Knock Out roses are generally considered non-toxic to humans, dogs, cats, and horses, making them a safe addition to landscapes.
Pruning: Prune Knock Out roses annually in late winter or early spring (just as new growth begins) by cutting them back to 12–18 inches above the ground.

***Sources*:** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_%27Knock_Out%27.;
https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=b481.;
https://www.lowes.com/n/how-to/how-to-plant-and-grow-knock-out-roses.

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/.;

LAVENDER ‘Spanish Eyes’
(*Lavandula multifida*)
Lamiaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to the Mediterranean region.
***Overview*:** Known for its finely cut, fern-like, aromatic foliage, it is frequently called Fern Leaf or Egyptian lavender. It is a fast-growing, tender perennial known for its sky-blue flower spikes. Also known as English Lavender. It is excellent for attracting pollinators like bees and butterflies.
General Characteristics and Care: Lavender ’Spanish Eyes’ features "butterfly-like" blooms—flower spikes topped with prominent petals often compared to "rabbit ears". It offers a distinct aroma; while the flowers have a classic lavender scent, the foliage is often described as having notes of oregano or rosemary. This variety is particularly well-suited for warmer climates, such as Northeast Florida, but can be grown as an annual in cooler regions.
Zones: USDA Zones: 7a to 10b.
Exposure: This plant likes full sun, at least 6-8 hours per day.
Soil: Lavender is best with moist, well drained, loamy soil, pH 6.6 - 7.8.
Water: It is drought-tolerant once established, requiring little water and well-drained, even poor, soil.
Fertilizer: The plant requires little to no fertilizer, thriving in poor, well-draining soil. Over-fertilizing causes weak, leggy growth and fewer blooms. If needed, apply a small amount of slow-release, balanced fertilizer (like 7-7-7 or 10-10-10) only once in early spring.
Bloom Period: Blooms in Summer, late summer.
Flower Color: Features vibrant, bright sky-blue to deep blue flowers with violet overtones.
Size: Typically reaches 18–24 inches in height and spreads 18–30 inches wide.
Toxicity: Lavender 'Spanish Eyes' is generally considered safe for humans, but it can be mildly toxic to pets (dogs, cats, and horses) if ingested in large quantities.
Pruning: Prune Lavender 'Spanish Eyes' twice annually to maintain a compact shape and prevent woody, leggy growth. The first, heavier prune should occur in early spring after new growth begins, and the second, lighter prune should take place in late summer after flowering. Never cut into the old, brown wood, as it will not regrow.

Sources: https://info.ballseed.com/PlantInfo/?phid=037300001009291; https://www.outsidepride.com/seed/herb-seed/lavender/lavender-spanish-eyes.html?srsltid=AfmBOoopLYOXRl1Qx-0x2DWf99fASoq0zbTFJPab-Ku6hg7P68DlzeH2.; https://greg.app/plant-care/lavandula-multifida-spanish-eyes-lavender-spanish-eyes.

LICORICE PLANT
(*Helichrysum petiolare*)
Asteraceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to the Cape Provinces of South Africa.
***Overview*:** This trailing, aromatic subshrub is indigenous to the coastal areas, open grasslands, and forest edges of the southern African region. It has also become naturalized in parts of Portugal and the United States.
General Characteristics and Care: The plant is often referred to locally as *imphepho* and is used for medicinal purposes and as incense. It is also widely cultivated globally for its ornamental grey-green foliage and drought-tolerant nature. The foliage has a faint licorice aroma, but *Helichrysum petiolare* is not closely related to true licorice *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, from which candy is made. Licorice plants are exceptionally easy to grow. They don't need much in the way of fertilizers. Avoid over-watering.
Zones: USDA Zones 9 to 11.
Exposure: Part to full sun.
Soil: A highly adaptable plant, thriving in a wide range of soil pH levels, including slightly acidic, neutral, to slightly alkaline conditions. For optimal growth, likes a pH between 6.0 and 7.0.
Water: Keep dry to medium moisture. Susceptible to root rot, particularly in poorly drained soils.
Fertilizer: Use a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer (e.g., 10-10-10 or 12-12-12) or a slow-release formula once a month during the growing season.
Bloom Period: Summer and fall.
Flower Color: Tiny white flowers, if and when they do bloom, are insignificant and often removed by gardeners as they appear. Grown primarily for silver foliage color.
Size: It grows to about 45 cm (18 in.) high and 150 cm (59 in.) wide.
Toxicity: It is generally considered non-toxic to humans and pets, making it safe for ornamental use and in it native region, for medicinal use.
Pruning: Prune in early spring to maintain a compact, bushy shape and manage its fast growth, cutting back older stems by up to one-third. Regular light trimming throughout summer prevents it from becoming woody or leggy, while removing flower heads encourages denser, silver-white foliage.
Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helichrysum_petiolare.; https://www.provenwinners.com/plants/helichrysum/white-licorice-licorice-plant-helichrysum-petiolare.; https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=277536.

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-1-d&q=live+oak.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quercus_virginiana.; 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.;

LOBELIA 'Cardinal Flower'
(*Lobelia cardinalis*)
Campanulaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to the Americas, from southeastern Canada south through the eastern and southwestern United States, Mexico and Central America to northern Colombia.
***Overview*:** It is found primarily in wet places, such as riparian zones, riverbanks, bogs or swamps. The plant tends to occupy locations near a water source, providing its roots with consistent hydration. This plant is easily propagated by seed or by dividing-out the young plants, which are seen forming around the older, more mature plants each year. Although the plant is generally considered a perennial, they may be short-lived, or behave more as a "long-term annual."
General Characteristics and Care: Cardinal flower has very showy red blooms. It is particularly attractive at the edge of a woodland garden. The soil must be kept moist or wet at all times. A winter mulching in northern climes is beneficial. It can be propagated by bending a stem down into the mud and fastening it with a rock or sticks. The flowers attract birds, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Used by Amerindians as a medicinal plant for a variety of symptoms. Also used as a love potion.
Zones: USDA zones 3 through 9.
Exposure: Sun, part shade, shade.
Soil: Moist to wet, humus-rich soil. Medium loam, clay loam, sandy loam. Likes a pH of between 6.0 and 7.0.
Water: Must be kept in moist soil.
Fertilizer: Cardinal Flower generally has moderate fertilizer needs, using a balanced fertilizer.
Bloom Period: Flowers from May through October.
Flower Color: Bright red.
Size: It typically grows to a height of 2 to 5 feet (60-150 cm) with a spread of 1 to 2 feet (30-60 cm). Its mature size can vary depending on growing conditions like soil moisture.
Toxicity: As a member of the *Lobelia* genus, *L.cardinalis* contains a number of naturally-occurring, toxic alkaloids, including lobelanine and lobeline, rendering the species potentially harmful if ingested.
Pruning: Pruning involves deadheading spent flowers and cutting back stems to promote bushier growth, ideally from early spring to late fall. It is also important to remove dead or damaged foliage as needed.

Sources: https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=loca2.;
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobelia_cardinalis.;
https://plants.usda.gov/DocumentLibrary/plantguide/pdf/cs_loca2.pdf.

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 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://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 twopence, 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. t 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/.

MAIDENHAIR FERN (Spleenwort Fern)
(*Asplenium trichomanes*)
Aspleniceae

***Geographical Origin*:** A widespread fern species with a cosmopolitan distribution, meaning it's native to a wide range of locations worldwide. Specifically, it is native to most of the United States, including Hawaii.
***Overview*:** One of the finest miniature ferns, award-winning *Asplenium trichomanes* (Maidenhair Spleenwort) is an evergreen fern forming a pretty rosette of long, slender, tapering fronds adorned with glossy black stems boasting many small, rounded or oblong, bright green leaves. It remains lush and fresh-looking throughout the year. While small and fragile looking, this small fern is incredibly tough once established. Low maintenance, disease, and pest-free, Maidenhair Spleenwort is ideal for grouping in the garden's foreground, and containers and equally attractive in wall crevices where it can be admired close-up or in a shady rock garden. The specific epithet *trichomanes* refers to the Greek word for fern.
General Characteristics and Care: This plant is a great choice for shady beds and borders, underplanting of roses and shrubs, cottage gardens, or city or rock gardens and containers. Virtually pest and disease free. This easy but slow-growing fern performs well in light, open, dappled, or deep shade. It grows fastest in rich well-drained soil, but it will grow well in most soil types except those that become water-logged.
Zones: USDA zones 3a to 9b. This means it can be grown outdoors in a wide range of climates, from relatively cold to mild.
Exposure: This fern likes partial sun to shade.
Soil: Best in chalk, clay, loam, and sand, preferring a slightly alkaline to neutral pH, typically between 6.5 and 7.5. It is best grown in fertile, humus-rich, moist, well-drained soils.
Water: Water moderately**.** It is drought tolerant when established.
Fertilizer: Use a balanced liquid fertilizer, such as one with a 10-10-10 or 20-20-20 NPK ratio, Dilute the fertilizer to half strength and apply it every few weeks.
Bloom Period: Does not bloom; grown for its foliage.
Flower Color: None.
Size: Grows 5"-6" tall and has a spread of 6" to 1'.
Toxicity: Generally considered non-toxic to humans and pets, including dogs and cats.
Pruning: Dead or damaged fronds may be removed as necessary.

Sources: https://www.gardenia.net/plant/asplenium-trichomanes.; https://www.gardenia.net/plant/asplenium-trichomanes.; https://www.greatplantpicks.org/plantlists/view/186.;

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-1-d&q=marigold+care.; 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 Foots. 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 *Melapodium* 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.

MEXICAN HEATHER
(*Cuphea hyssopifolia 'Florigloria'*)
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-leafed", 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?srsltid=AfmBOoq8ykhMxB-DvHWWxThdyDmB-0FESb5oAk3nzIxafDxnv2jEG6iN.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuphea_hyssopifolia.;

MICROBURST TEXAS SAGE
(*Leucophyllum x Candidum*)
Scrophulariaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** A cultivated variety of a native plant originating from the arid, rocky regions of West Texas and Northern Mexico.
***Overview*:** Developed by Civano Growers, it is the first true dwarf Texas sage on the market — and it brings a game-changing trait that no other Leucophyllum cultivar offers: genuine tolerance for heavy, poorly drained soils. For landscape architects and commercial contractors specifying plants for urban sites across the Southwest, South, and Pacific Northwest, 'Microburst' fills a gap that has long frustrated professional designers.
General Characteristics and Care: *Leucophyllum candidum 'Microburst',* commonly known as Violet Silverleaf, is a captivating and drought-tolerant shrub cherished for its unique attributes. Gulf Coast summer humidity triggers heavy bloom cycles. Resistant to animals such as Deer.
Zones: Cold-tolerant through USDA Zone 7.
Exposure: Full sun.
Soil: Tolerates heavy, damp, compacted, and poor-draining soils better than any other *Leucophyllum* variety.
Water: Drought Tolerant. Once established, water occasionally.
Fertilizer: While it thrives in poor soil, a single, light application of a slow-release, general-purpose fertilizer in early spring can be used if desired, though over-fertilizing can reduce blooming.
Bloom Period: Late summer into fall.
Flower Color: Fragrant ultraviolet-purple flowers throughout warm months, triggered by rising humidity and barometric pressure changes.
Size: 3 ft tall × 3 ft wide — genuinely compact, no crowding.
Toxicity: Considered non-toxic to pets, including dogs, cats, and horses, and is not listed in major plant toxicity databases.
Pruning: A dwarf shrub that typically requires little to no pruning, as it maintains a compact, naturally rounded shape.

Sources: https://www.monrovia.com/microburst-texas-sage-47338.html?srsltid=AfmBOoofXMxM-lp3nrBx7SQmeEusEinnBi6GeVvP1OfIbXgnmVI8pDpr.; https://www.civanogrowers.com/post/microburst-leucophyllum-small-flowering-shrubs-for-desert-landscapes.; https://www.littlerednursery.com/products/microburst-texas-sage?srsltid=AfmBOoprZ7VAPx5aeKzAtHjNwNA1FJLtBxUlBkYKSYuRMEK34giIG6nH.

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 japonicas 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/

MOSES-IN-THE-BULRUSHES (Moses-in-the-Cradle; Oyster Plant)
(*Tradescantia spathacea*)
Commelinaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Its native range is southern Mexico to Guatemala. It has become naturalized in parts of coastal Southern California, Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana, Texas, and various Pacific and Indian Ocean islands.
***Overview*:** Previously known as *Rhoeo spathacea*, the oyster plant is desired for its attractive foliage. The plant grows in a tall rosette with linear or lanceolate leaves that are stiff and sword-like. The upper surface is dark green and purple on the undersides. Sometimes the upper leaf surface may be green with pale yellow stripes. The unusual inflorescences and small white flowers are a bonus. Purple boat-shaped bracts enclose the white flowers. They are followed by a dry, 2-seeded capsule.
General Characteristics and Care: The specific epithet, *spathacea*, means "with a spathe." This low-maintenance plant may bloom at any time of the year, and it is easy to propagate by seed, division or stem cutting.
Zones: In zones 9 and higher, it can grow outdoors where it will form a dense mat groundcover.
Exposure: Needs bright sun indoors but shade to partial shade outdoors. If kept outdoors in the summer, provide it with afternoon shade.
Soil: It prefers soil that retains some moisture but doesn't become waterlogged. Will grow in clay; sand; loam. Needs slightly acidic to neutral soil with a pH range of 6.0 to 7.0. A pH between 6.1 and 6.5 is often cited as ideal.
Water: It is extremely drought tolerant, even growing in cracks in a concrete wall. Prone to root rot if overwatered.
Fertilizer: A balanced liquid fertilizer diluted to half strength is recommended during the growing season (spring and summer) once a month.
Bloom Period: It flowers periodically throughout the year.
Flower Color: White.
Size: It grows 6 inches to 1 foot tall and 1 to 2 feet wide.
Toxicity: If ingested, the oyster plant is toxic to humans and pets. Keep this plant out of reach of small children and pets. The sap of this plant can also cause contact dermatitis for both humans and pets. Wearing protective gloves are recommended when handling this plant.
Pruning: Benefits from pruning to maintain its shape, encourage bushier growth, and remove any damaged or dead leaves.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tradescantia_spathacea.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/tradescantia-spathacea/.; https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/FP510.

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*)

Arecaceae

***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 romanzoffiania* (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 temporate 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.

NEMESIA ‘Escential Snowberry)
(*Nemesia strumosa ‘Escential*)
Scrophulariaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Coastal areas of South Africa.
***Overview*:** These nemesias are essential for scent in the garden. Large flowers with bold colors and intense fragrance make these a staple in the garden. Escential® varieties are the most heat-tolerant nemesia on the market today. The Nemesia Escential 'Snowberry' is a modern hybrid, part of the heat-tolerant Escential series developed by PlantHaven and introduced around 2023-2024, known for its strong vanilla-like scent, compact size, and vibrant white flowers.
General Characteristics and Care: Suited for garden applications such as beds, borders, rock gardens and containers, its cultivars (many of which are actually hybrids with *Nemesia versicolor*) come in a wide variety of flower colors, including bicolored.
Zones: When grown as a cool-weather annual it can be planted in USDA zones 2 through 10.
Exposure: Likes full sun.
Soil: Nemesia prefers well-draining soil with organic matter. Poor soil quality can affect their growth. Soil pH slightly acidic to neutral, ideally between 5.8 and 6.5**.**
Water: Needs moderate, consistent moisture**,** aiming for evenly moist, well-drained soil, but never soggy conditions, as it's prone to root rot.
Fertilizer: Use a balanced, low-nitrogen fertilizer or organic compost, applying a slow-release in spring or a water-soluble one every couple of weeks during active growth, as it promotes blooms without excess leafy growth,
Bloom Period: Early spring through autumn.
Flower Color: Produces elegant, fragrant flowers that are pure white with vibrant yellow eyes (centers).
Size: From 8”-12” by 8” - 12’.
Toxicity: Nemesia 'Escential Snowberry' is not known to cause harm to humans or pets.
Pruning: Pinch when young to encourage strong basal branching. Trim after flowering to encourage good habit a rapid re-flowering. Trim to re-flower in 3 in 4 weeks.

Sources: https://planthaven.com/plant/nemesia-escential-snowberry/; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nemesia_(plant); https://greg.app/plant-care/nemesia-escential-snowberry. https://plants.usda.gov/documentlibrary/factsheet/pdf/fs_syal.pdf.

NEMESIA ‘Escential Blackberry)
(*Nemesia strumosa ‘Escential’*)
Scrophulariaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Coastal areas of South Africa.
***Overview*:** These Nemesias are essential for scent in the garden. Large flowers with bold colors and intense fragrance make these a staple in the garden. Escential® varieties are the most heat-tolerant nemesia on the market today. The Nemesia Escential 'Blackberry' is a modern hybrid, part of the heat-tolerant Escential series developed by PlantHaven and introduced around 2023-2024, known for its strong vanilla-like scent, compact size, and vibrant white flowers.
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Zones: When grown as a cool-weather annual it can be planted in USDA zones 2 through 10.
Exposure: Likes full sun.
Soil: Nemesia prefers well-draining soil with organic matter. Poor soil quality can affect their growth. Soil pH slightly acidic to neutral, ideally between 5.8 and 6.5**.**
Water: Needs moderate, consistent moisture**,** aiming for evenly moist, well-drained soil, but never soggy conditions, as it's prone to root rot.
Fertilizer: Use a balanced, low-nitrogen fertilizer or organic compost, applying a slow-release in spring or a water-soluble one every couple of weeks during active growth, as it promotes blooms without excess leafy growth,
Bloom Period: Early spring through autumn.
Flower Color: Produces large flowers with bold saturated violet-blue flowers with a bold white eye.
Size: From 8”-12” by 8” - 12’.
Toxicity: Nemesia 'Escential Blackberry' is not known to cause harm to humans or pets.
Pruning: Pinch when young to encourage strong basal branching. Trim after flowering to encourage good habit a rapid re-flowering. Trim to re-flower in 3 in 4 weeks.

Sources: https://planthaven.com/plant/nemesia-escential-snowberry/; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nemesia_(plant); https://greg.app/plant-care/nemesia-escential-snowberry. https://plants.usda.gov/documentlibrary/factsheet/pdf/fs_syal.pdf.

OLEANDER
(*Nerium oleander*)
Apocynaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to a broad region spanning the Mediterranean basin, the Arabian Peninsula, and parts of Asia (including India and central China).
***Overview*:** Also known as Rose Laurel, Be-still Tree or Rosebay, Oleander is a shrub or small tree cultivated worldwide in temperate and subtropical areas as an ornamental and landscaping plant. It is the only species currently classified in the genus *Nerium.* It is intolerant of temperatures at or below 32 degrees F and may be damaged by cold winters. Prune back frost-damaged and dead branches once winter passes.
General Characteristics and Care: While it's true that all parts of the plant are toxic if ingested, you can still enjoy Oleander. Just choose a spot in your yard that is away from small children and curious pets. Fast growing, it has beautiful flowers, and can grow in a broad range of soils. It's so easy to care for, you'll find it planted alongside highways and interstates throughout Florida, where it handles heat and car exhaust admirably. Also tolerant of sea spray, and thus makes a colorful addition to the beachside landscape.
Zones: USDA hardiness zones 8 through 10.
Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Thrives in well-drained, nutrient-rich soil with a pH between 5.0 and 8.3, though they prefer slightly alkaline conditions.
Water: Requires moderate, regular watering during the growing season (spring–autumn) to keep soil evenly moist.
Fertilizer: Oleander plants are low-maintenance, requiring little to no fertilizer once established, though they benefit from a balanced, slow-release fertilizer in early spring and fall to boost growth.
Bloom Period: Oleander blooms in late spring to late summer.
Flower Color: It comes in a variety of flower colors, from pink to peach to white.
Size: Oleander grows to 2–6 meters (7–20 feet) tall. It is most commonly grown in its natural shrub form, but can be trained into a small tree with a single trunk.
Toxicity: Oleanders contain a naturally occurring toxin (cardenolide glycosides) that, when ingested in certain quantities, can be harmful—even fatal—to humans and pets.
Pruning: The flowers are fragrant and showy and appear on new growth, so refrain from pruning after early fall to avoid removing next year's flower buds.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nerium.; https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/shrubs/oleander/.;https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/nerium-oleander/.;https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/tbt/history-of-oleander-plants.

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-realease 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.

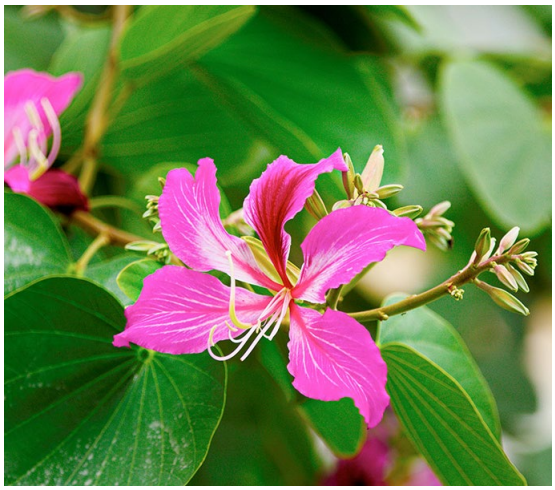
Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bitter_orange; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/citrus-x-aurantium/; https://tropical.theferns.info/viewtropical.php?id=Citrus+aurantium; https://www.picturethisai.com/wiki/Citrus_%C3%97_aurantium.html#:~:text=Bitter%20orange%20can%20be%20fertilized,mineral%20fertilizer%20in%20the%20winter.;

ORCHID
(*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 cme 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/;

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.

OXALIS (Wood Sorrel)
(*Oxalis tetraphylla*)
Oxalidaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to South America and parts of North America.
***Overview*:** The leaves are divided into three to ten or more obovate and top-notched leaflets, arranged palmately with all the leaflets of roughly equal size. The majority of species have three leaflets, superficially similar to those of some clovers. Several *Oxalis* species dominate the plant life in local woodland ecosystems. Can be invasive outside their native ranges. Wood sorrel is an edible wild plant that has been consumed by humans around the world for millennia. Native American Kiowa people chewed wood sorrel to alleviate thirst on long trips, the Potawatomi cooked it with sugar to make a dessert, and the Algonquin considered it an aphrodisiac.
General Characteristics and Care: This genus may have a symbiotic relationship with nitrogen fixing *Bacillus* endophytes, storing them in plant tissues and seeds, which could explain its ability to spread rapidly even in poor soils. Also known as a false Shamrock.
Zones: USDA zones 6 to 10.
Exposure: Oxalis does best in very bright indirect sunlight and can also handle direct sunlight through a window. However, if kept outside it cannot handle direct light and must be kept in the shade.
Soil: Oxalis plants like slightly acidic soil with a pH of 6.0 to 6.5.
Water: Oxalis plants generally prefer their soil to dry out halfway between waterings, usually every 1-2 weeks.
Fertilizer: Fertilize with a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer once a month during the growing season (spring and summer). Avoid fertilizing during the dormant period.
Bloom Period: Oxalis plants typically flower from late spring through early fall.
Flower Color: Petal color varies from white to pink, red, or yellow.
Size: Oxalis plants typically reach a mature size of 6 to 12 inches in height and width.
Toxicity: Oxalis plants, contain soluble calcium oxalates, which are toxic to dogs, cats, and horses. The toxic principal is oxalic acid, which can cause kidney failure, muscle tremors, salivation, and other symptoms if ingested in large quantities.
Pruning: Prune to remove yellow or dead leaves. Pinch back stems to encourage bushier growth.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxalis.; https://bloomscape.com/plant-care-guide/oxalis/.;https://www.gardenia.net/plant/oxalis-triangularis.

OYSTER PLANT 'TRICOLOR'
(*Tradescantia spathacea*)
Commelinaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Southern Mexico to Guatemala
***Overview*:** Previously known as the *Rhoeo spathacea,* this plant is a is a clumping, broadleaf evergreen, herbaceous perennial in the spiderwort family (Commelinaceae).
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.

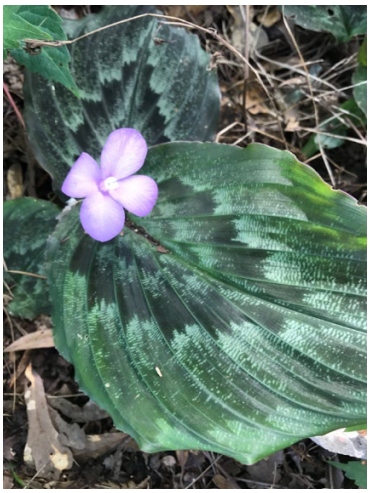
Sources: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/tricolor-mosesinthecradle-plant--207024914096066624/; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/tradescantia-spathacea/; https://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/database/documents/pdf/shrub_fact_sheets/rhospaa.pdf; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tradescantia_spathacea; https://www.houseplant411.com/houseplant/moses-in-the-cradle-plant-how-to-grow-care-guide/;

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 scortch.
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__Gorgusis_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=Spathiphyllopsis%20Teijsm.; https://www.almanac.com/plant/peace-lilies; https://costafarms.com/blogs/plant-finder/peace-lily?srsltid=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: *Kaempheria* 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/florafaunaweb.;
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

PEPEROMIA ‘Florida’
(*Peperomia obtusifolia*)
Piperaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Florida and the West Indies.
***Overview*:** Florida Peperomia (*Peperomia obtusifolia*), also called baby rubber plant, is perfect for filling shaded areas as a groundcover or as a houseplant. The *Peperomia* genus includes over 1000 species of plants native to tropical and subtropical areas. Many are succulent-like and have fleshy leaves that can store water.
General Characteristics and Care: True to its name, Florida peperomia is perfectly suited for a humid, warm climate like Florida. It can be seen growing in bogs in the Everglades but is considered *endangered*. As an outdoor plant, it grows best in Central and South Florida. There are various cultivars of Florida peperomia popular in the market, including ‘Marble’, which has leaves with variably sectored patterns of dark green, creamy white and grayish green. ‘Minima’ is a dwarf cultivar, half the size of the species. ‘Variegata’ has dark green and grayish green leaves bordered by creamy white.
Zones: USDA Hardiness Zones 10 through 11.
Exposure: One highlight of this plant is its tolerance for shade. It’s difficult to find turfgrass that can grow in shaded environments, so a groundcover like Peperomia might be a better option.
Soil: It can grow in most soils, and prefers rich, organic soils. Peperomia prefers a slightly acidic to neutral soil pH, ideally within the range of 6.0 to 7.0.
Water: It is drought tolerant and needs well-drained conditions to prevent stem and root rot. When watering, less is more.
Fertilizer: A balanced, liquid fertilizer diluted to half-strength can be applied monthly during the spring and summer growing seasons. Avoid fertilizing during the winter when the plant is dormant.
Bloom Period: Blooms appear periodically throughout the year when grown outside. When grown as a houseplant, blooms rarely appear. The fruits are small, brown and oval.
Flower Color: Its miniscule green-white flowers grow along the surface of reddish, leafless stems about 5 inches long. The blooms are interesting, but not showy.
Size: Grows 6 to 12 inches tall and spreads 1 to 2 feet wide.
Toxicity: The Peperomia genus, including the various cultivars often referred to as "Peperomia Florida", are considered non-toxic to humans and pets, including dogs, cats, and even rabbits.
Pruning: Peperomia 'Florida' can be pruned to maintain its shape and encourage bushier growth.

Sources: https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/houseplants/florida-peperomia/.;
https://www.wilcoxnursery.com/store/Florida-Peperomia-P-obtusifolia-p189307102.;
https://www.floridanativeplants.com/shop/p/p4w7gzs7krpa2fxcfbfjblyjsyl3c8-n4nw5.

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 soppy 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://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=Philodrendron+Brazil.; https://tedsgardens.com/rare-and-exciting-philodendrons-to-add-to-your-collection/.;https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philodendron_hederaceum

PHILODENDRON ‘McColley’s Finale’
(*Philodendron* spp.)
Araceae

***Geographical Origin*:** While this plant is a hybrid, the parent plants originated from the tropical rainforests of Central and South America.
***Overview*:** *Philodendron* ‘McColley’s Finale’ is a low-maintenance cultivar known for its changing leaf colors, which start copper-red and morph into deep green as they mature. Unlike many other philodendrons that grow as vines, McColley’s Finale features a unique mounding growth habit, with its stems emerging from the center of the plant. It is a hybrid that was developed by Robert H. McColley, a nurseryman of Bamboo Nurseries, in Apopka, Florida.
General Characteristics and Care: Philodendrons can come in many shapes, sizes, forms, and colors. Many Philodendrons will change their leaf shape as they mature.
Zones: USDA Zones 4-9.
Exposure: McColley's Finale thrives in bright, indirect light.
Soil: Philodendrons thrive in slightly acidic soil with a pH range of 5.0 to 6.0.
Water: Allow the top inch of soil to dry out completely between waterings, adjusting frequency based on light and temperature. Signs of thirst include wilting or yellowing leaves with dry, crispy tips, while overwatering can lead to root rot.
Fertilizer: Fertilize once a month during the spring and summer with a balanced, half-strength liquid houseplant fertilizer.
Bloom Period: This Philodendron can flower during spring and summer, but it is a rare occurrence, and typically happens only after the plant has reached maturity, which can take up to *16 years*.
Flower Color: Flowers are insignificant, are a spadix surrounded by a spathe, and are green or cream in color as are most flowers from plants in this genus.
Size: Height 3-4 feet; Width 2-3 feet.
Toxicity: Philodendron McColley's Finale is toxic to humans and pets, as it contains calcium oxalate crystals in its leaves.
Pruning: Trim leggy stems just below a node to encourage a bushier, more compact form. Remove any yellowing or unsightly older leaves at the base of the plant to keep it healthy and tidy.

Sources: https://livetrends.com/plant-care/philodendron-mccolleys-finale/; https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/57395; https://www.gabriellaplants.com/products/mccolley-hybrid-philodendron?srsltid=AfmBOoq2ZqtUMpXBQl2Rc9UAcRZtz0hlJXhrR6dc2W2zqtVYoi2liHvA; https://eureka-farms.com/products/philodendron-mccolley-finale?srsltid=AfmBOopH5aui8SeJZ2IRiwwxzrIBXt_hlLJ8s_VWj4CxXzsfcXGX3VLl.

PHILODENDRON ‘White Princess’
(*Philodendron erubescens*)
Araceae

***Geographical Origin*:** The Philodendron White Princess is a cultivated hybrid rather than a species found directly in the wild, likely originating from crosses involving South American *Philodendron erubescens* stock. Its parent species are native to tropical rainforests in Colombia and Costa Rica.
***Overview*:** The Philodendron 'White Princess' is a sought-after, rare tropical plant known for its striking, high-contrast variegation featuring glossy green, white, and occasionally pink foliage. It has a compact, upright, and bushy growth habit.
General Characteristics and Care: White Princess is a newer hybrid cultivar of the blushing philodendron as the specific epithet *erubescens* implies. Philodendrons are aroids. Unlike its parent plant, White Princess is a self-heading, not climbing philodendron, forming a dense colony originating on a single stalk.
Zones: A tropical plant best suited for USDA Hardiness Zones 9b-11, where it can thrive outdoors in warm, humid conditions. It is highly sensitive to cold and prefers temperatures between 65° and 80° F.
Exposure: This philodendron prefers bright, indirect light but can tolerate shade.
Soil: 'White Princess' thrives in slightly acidic to neutral soil, with an ideal pH range between 5.5 and 7.0**.** This range ensures optimal nutrient absorption, preventing issues like stunted growth or yellowing leaves.
Water: Keep the soil slightly moist but never soggy. They are highly susceptible to root rot.
Fertilizer: Fertilize regularly during the growing season with a balanced plant fertilizer to promote healthy growth and vibrant foliage.
Bloom Period: Late spring to early summer. Blooms are rare, often appearing in mature, well-cared-for plants. While rare, they do not require pruning unless the plant is struggling, as they are part of the natural growth cycle, blooming typically in warm conditions.
Flower Color: Small white or light green spadix flowers surrounded by a spathe.
Size: Typically reaches a mature height and spread of 2-4 feet.
Toxicity: White Princess are considered to be toxic when eaten. All philodendron plants contain calcium oxalate crystals which are toxic to both humans and pets.
Pruning: Regular pruning encourages a fuller shape.

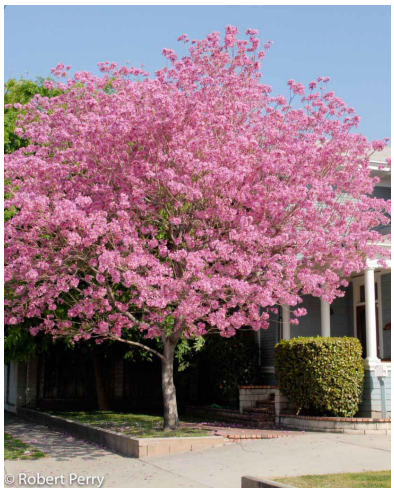
Sources: https://myperfectplants.com/products/white-princess-philodendron-plant?srsltid=AfmBOoq2cM5vwD6SDeW3v_t7VkgVTNXGesNIlY8thjXWZq7_lQpidAGd.; https://tonkadale.com/philodendron-white-princess.; https://orangelakenursery.com/products/philodendron-white-princess?srsltid=AfmBOopxnSktnh3q3c82_2ezTz5Uz_dX-JE5rOnd6XiZXppMkq1-SeiJ.

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/.;

PLECTRANTHUS ‘Velvet Starlet’ (Swedish Ivy)
(*Plectranthus forsteri*)
Lamiaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Africa and India.
***Overview*:** Plectranthus 'Velvet Starlet' is a cultivar within the *Plectranthus* genus, commonly known as Swedish Ivy, Spur Flower, or Coleus. It is a tender perennial, often grown as an annual, known for its attractive foliage and vibrant, two-lipped tubular flowers in shades of rose, pink, and violet. The plant is particularly appreciated for its compact, upright growth habit and ability to branch well without pinching
General Characteristics and Care: A distant relative of the mint family, Plectranthus mostly come from from South Africa, where they grow into large shrubs. Almost unknown 20 years ago (2005), Plectranthus have become an important garden addition in the last several years. It is a versatile plant, suitable for containers, borders, and even as a houseplant. Plectranthus are short-day flowering plants. Six hours of daylight will trigger flowering and slow down vegetative growth.
Zones: USDA hardiness zones 9-11.
Exposure: Partial to full shade.
Soil: Plectranthus prefers a well-draining, acidic soil with a pH of 5.5 to 6.5.
Water: It requires moderate watering, avoiding both overwatering and complete dryness.
Fertilizer: Maintaining a constant feed of nitrogen is recommended but too high levels of nitrogen can cause stretching and result in open, poorly shaped plants. A balanced, slow-release fertilizer is recommended.
Bloom Period: It blooms from late summer to October, offering a prolonged display of color.
Flower Color: It has dark green leaves with purple undertones, often with silver patterns. Flowers of bright rose, pink, and violet are layered upon each other giving a pleasing effect.
Size: Plectranthus grows to 18" tall and 21" wide.
Toxicity: Plectranthus 'Velvet Starlet' is generally considered non-toxic for humans and pets.
Pruning: This plant benefits from regular pruning to encourage bushier growth.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plectranthus.;
https://www.terranovanurseries.com/product/plectranthus-velvet-starlet/.;
https://gardengoodsdirect.com/products/plectranthus-velvet-starlet?srsltid=AfmBOopSDGhUd8vn3vQYlmB65EGQa4Pk6oHJq-lBz9lxgNCoDkCIi4hX

PLUMBAGO
(*Plumbago auriculata*)
Plumbaginaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to South Africa
***Overview*:** The widely cultivated *Plumbago auriculata* (Cape Leadwort) originates from South Africa, specifically the Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Plumbago is a popular, low-maintenance tropical shrub famous for its intense, sky-blue, phlox-like flowers that bloom almost year-round in hot climates. It is highly prized for its drought tolerance, ability to attract butterflies, and its adaptability to be used as a large shrub, hedge, or cascading spiller in containers. The plant has sticky, gland-tipped hairs on its flower calyxes, designed to attach to animals or insects for seed dispersal, which sometimes trap small insects.
General Characteristics and Care: Plumbago is a fast-growing, and heat-tolerant, shrubby perennial, perfect for the Florida climate. It is also generally resistant to deer browsing. A sprawling, mounded shrub with thin, vine-like branches and light green, spoon-shaped leaves. Mature plumbago leaves often have a whitish residue on their undersides, a feature that can confuse gardeners. While this white material resembles a powdery mildew disease or a chemical spray deposit, it is actually a natural exudate from "chalk" glands that are found on the *Plumbago* species.
Zones: USDA Zones 8-11.
Exposure: Prefers full sun for maximum blooms but tolerates light shade.
Soil: Thrives in fertile, well-drained soil, preferring a slightly acidic to neutral pH. It is highly adaptable to various soil types but requires excellent drainage to avoid root rot.
Water: Water regularly to establish; once established, it is drought-tolerant, though regular watering keeps it fuller.
Fertilizer: Feed with a slow-release fertilizer in early spring and occasionally throughout summer if in containers.
Bloom Period: Spring through late fall. All year round in frost free zones.
Flower Color: Bright cerulean blue.
Size: Can reach 6 to 10 feet tall and wide in frost-free areas. It can be trained as a climber on a trellis or used as a cascading groundcover.
Toxicity: All parts are considered slightly toxic to humans and pets; contact with the sap can cause skin irritation or dermatitis.
Pruning: Prune anytime to control size, or heavily in early spring to encourage bushier growth.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plumbago.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/plumbago/.;https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/ornamentals/plumbago/.

PLUMERIA (Frangipani)
(*Plumeria rubra*)
Apocynaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to dry, hot areas of Mexico, Central America and Venezuela.
***Overview*:** Plumeria rubra (Frangipani) is a deciduous shrub or small tree of vase or umbrella shape with fleshy, succulent branches boasting highly fragrant, spiral-shaped, yellow-centered pink to red flowers, 4 in. across (10 cm). Blooming throughout most of the year in tropical areas, the blossoms are borne in terminal clusters at the branch tips. The flowers are sometimes followed by dry, brown, cylindrical, 5 in. long (12 cm) seed follicles containing winged seeds. Leathery, narrowly elliptic, dark green leaves, 8-16 in. Frangipani works well as a freestanding specimen, a patio tree, or as part of a mixed shrub border. Plumeria ranks as a top choice among tropical flowers for enthusiasts and gardeners. Genus name honors Charles Plumier (1646-1704), a French monk of the Franciscan order, botanist, and traveler.
General Characteristics and Care:
Plumeria is a perfect addition to beds and borders, coastal gardens, and Mediterranean gardens. Great in decorative containers. No serious pest or disease issues. Keep an eye out for rot in soils with poor drainage and spider mite. Propagates by seed sown in containers at 64F in spring. Take ripe cuttings of leafless stem tips in early spring. Allow these to dry thoroughly at the base before inserting them into a rooting medium. Plumeria flowers are used to make leis and a scented oil in a number of Pacific islands including Hawaii.
Zones: USDA Zones 10-12.
Exposure: Performs best in full sun.
Soil: Plumeria prefers rich, dry to medium moisture, well-drained soils.
Water: Likes dry to medium soil moisture; salt and drought tolerant.
Fertilizer: Use a high phosphorus fertilizer and begin fertilizing with spring growth.
Bloom Period: Early summer to fall.
Flower Color: Flowers are pink to red.
Size: Typically grows up to 15-25 ft. tall and wide (450-750 cm).
Toxicity: Plumeria branches exude a milky sap when injured, which can irritate the eyes and cause dermatitis in susceptible individuals. Mildly poisonous, ingesting leaves or flowers can irritate the digestive tract. If your dog eats Plumeria, he may show mild to severe signs of poisoning.
Pruning: Very little pruning may be required in springtime. Any drastic or hard pruning done may reduce flowering.

Sources: https://www.gardenia.net/plant/plumeria-rubra.;
https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=d451.;
https://www.summerwindsnursery.com/az/inspire/blog/how-to-care-for-plumeria/.

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://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/charlotteco/2022/11/17/the-multipurpose-podocarpus/.;

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=l.; 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/

PRAYER PLANT ‘MARION’
(*Calathea majestica ‘Marion’*)
Marantaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Bolivia, Brazil North, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, and Peru.
***Overview*:** *Calathea majestica* 'Marion', also known as Calathea 'Marion', is a striking plant known for its decorative, patterned foliage. The leaves are often variegated with bright colors such as pink, orange, red, and white. The underside of their leaves is frequently purple. During the night, the leaves fold up, hence their name. In the morning, the leaves unfurl in search of the morning sun. This phenomenon, known as *nyctinasty,* is made possible by a small joint the plant possesses between the stem and leaf, called a *pulvinus*.
General Characteristics and Care: Caring for *Calathea majestica* involves mimicking its native tropical environment to ensure its vibrant foliage and healthy growth. Calatheas naturally grow on the rainforest floor under the canopy, so they thrive in dappled light.
Zones: USDA hardiness zones 10-11 when grown outdoors.
Exposure: This plant prefers low to medium light. Too much direct sunlight can damage their fragile leaves. Too much sun exposure may result in sunburn or dullness in the color of the leaves.
Soil: Calatheas enjoy a well-draining soil. *Calathea majestica* thrives in slightly acidic to neutral soil with a pH range of 6.0 to 7.0.
Water: Calatheas should be kept moist but not wet. Over or under watering these plants can lead to brown, dry leaves. They are sensitive to minerals found in tap water such as chlorine and fluoride.
Fertilizer: The Calathea requires regular, balanced fertilizer during its growth stages. It is best to avoid any fertilizer during the winter as that can be shocking for the plants in their dormancy.
Bloom Period: Calathea, typically blooms in spring and summer.
Flower Color: Calathea flowers can be yellow, purple, and white. The flowers have an asymmetrical structure with three petals and three free sepals. Calathea bracts are often more attractive than its flowers.
Size: *Calathea majestica* typically reaches a mature size of 1 to 2 feet tall and wide.
Toxicity: *Calathea majestica* is not toxic to humans or pets.
Pruning: This plant does not require you to prune it very frequently. Watch for any damaged and wilted leaves and remove them.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calathea.; https://www.plantvine.com/product/calathea-marion-prayer-plant/?srsltid=AfmBOoq1keiZ34SOv69paunCvQKPdIEMzt0qtMLoOz4iD6UqK54_u50b.; https://www.logees.com/calathea-white-star-calathea-majestica.html?srsltid=AfmBOooXcLk5cOwSkenCcoNEED9thkCcfswDbBZJab9OvIkxplkNwBN3.

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://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/purple-heart-tradescantia-pallida/.; https://www.monrovia.com/purple-heart.html.; 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/.;

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 it 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 fuscia flowers, which are extremely attractive to bees.
Size: A Ti plant can each 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://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 mall 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/.;

RUBBER PLANT (Rubber Fig)
(*Ficus elastica*)
Moraceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to eastern parts of South and Southeast Asia.
***Overview*:** *Ficus elastica* is grown around the world as an ornamental plant, outside in frost-free climates (although it also tolerates light frosts) from the tropical to the Mediterranean and inside in colder climates as a houseplant. Ornamental hybrids have been derived from *Ficus elastica* with broader, stiffer and more upright leaves than the wild form. The trunk develops aerial and buttressing roots to anchor it in the soil and help support heavy branches. Ficus elastica continues to be used in several areas of Southeast Asia as a "living bridge", being trained to grow over creeks and rivers for foot traffic. The species has erect fronds, but *Nephrolepis exaltata* 'Bostoniensis' (*Boston fern*) has gracefully arching fronds. This mutation was discovered in a shipment of *N. exaltata* to Boston from Philadelphia in 1894. Another origin of the term Boston fern was documented by David Fairchild, who said that the term came from Florida pioneer nurseryman John Soar, who sent the plants to his friend in Boston.
General Characteristics and Care: It is generally a very easygoing plant. The leaves develop inside a sheath at the apical meristem, which grows larger as the new leaf develops. When it is mature, it unfurls, and the sheath drops off the plant. All parts of the plant contain an abundant milky white latex, a chemical compound separate from its sap.
Zones: USDA zones 10-12.
Exposure: Prefers bright sunlight but not hot temperatures.
Soil: These plants thrive in slightly acidic to neutral soil with a pH between 5.5 and 7.0. They prefer well-draining soil.
Water: It has a high tolerance for drought, but prefers humidity and thrives in wet, tropical conditions.
Fertilizer: Fertilize once a month in summer only with any all-purpose fertilizer.
Bloom Period: It typically blooms during the spring, although indoor plants rarely produce blooms. Ficus flowers are hidden inside of their "fruit, an enclosed inflorescence containing hundreds of small, inconspicuous flowers inside.
Flower Color: Rubber plant blooms are small, greenish, and insignificant.
Size: This plant can reach about 30' (10m) and will have a spread of about 10" (3.2m). However, as a houseplant, it will be much smaller.
Toxicity: This plant is poisonous to cats, dogs, and humans if consumed.
Pruning: Remove dead leaves and branches at any time of the year. Cut the rubber plant branches just above the nodes to shape the tree.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ficus_elastica.; https://leafy-life.com/how-to-care-for-ficus-elastica/.; https://www.patchplants.com/pages/plant-care/complete-guide-to-rubber-plant-care/.; https://www.thesill.com/blogs/plants-101/how-to-care-for-rubber-tree-ficus-elastica?srsltid=AfmBOooeV00W_qZ8ILgO0GFNnoY3I7-Ffo8mFP2GO9b6A2WWNUXCS-OV.;

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://www.thespruce.com/royal-poinciana-growing-profile-3269287.

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.

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 '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?srsltid=AfmBOoq-l05dbKc3rV-QO9MtshK-G4S29GjZwN4xKrWIExSvaEqQGS5t.; 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.;

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.;

SHEFFLERA 'Gold Capella'
(*Schefflera* spp.)
Araliaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to tropical Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Islands.
***Overview*:** Schefflera, also called Umbrella Plant or Arbicola, is a popular houseplant because it's easy to grow, tolerating a range of growing conditions. It features unique, palmate (hand-shaped) leaves that fan out like an umbrella. Grown outside in warmer climates, it can become very large. Schefflera is associated with good fortune, prosperity, and positive energy.
General Characteristics and Care: This plant prefers high humidity. It can grow into a large shrub or small tree outdoors but is typically kept as a smaller houseplant indoors. Red spider mites, mealybugs, and scale can be a serious problem. If the soil is too wet or too dry the leaves will drop off. No serious disease problems.
Zones: USDA Zones 10-12. Thrives in temperatures between 50°F and 80°F.
Exposure: Medium sunlight to partial shade.
Soil: Needs moist, loamy, well-drained, acidic soil with a pH of between 6.0 and 7.0.
Water: Do not overwater but maintain a moist soil. Yellow and dropped leaves indicate that you might be watering too much.
Fertilizer: Feed Schefflera plants twice a week during the growing season with liquid fertilizer, or use two applications of slow-release pellets. They are heavy feeders and will benefit from the extra nutrients.
Bloom Period: Schefflera plants bloom in the summer. They are less likely to flower in temperate regions, but they do produce flowers occasionally, especially in warmer locations like Florida and southern California.
Flower Color: Blooms can be white, pink, or red, with inflorescences grouped in clusters at the end of branches.
Size: The plant grows 4-6 ft. tall, 3-6 ft. wide (indoors); up to 25 ft. tall (outdoors).
Toxicity: All parts of the plant are mildly toxic to humans and seriously toxic to dogs and cats.
Pruning: If Schefflera gets too big or leggy, prune it back at any time. Doing so will help it grow fuller and bushier.

Sources: https://costafarms.com/blogs/plant-finder/schefflera?srsltid=AfmBOooTFAqdWQ0BPyY34GJ6hHQoG3dOHUc5f1ewR10kY1A0FffvO-P9; https://www.livelyroot.com/products/umbrella-plant?srsltid=AfmBOorTTb882xCif4MiRAm9wOd6YdQ6CLm3VCoauhnBQSOleRHjEyCu; https://www.thespruce.com/grow-schefflera-plants-inside-1902771; https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/houseplants/schefflera/schefflera-plant-flowers.htm.

SEDUM ‘Lemon Coral’
(*Sedum rupeste ‘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://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/sedum-mexicanum-lemon-coral/.; https://greg.app/how-to-prune-sedum-lemon-ball/.

SELLOUM (Split Leaf Philodendron)
(*Thaumatophyllum 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-leafs 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-leafs 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://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thaumatophyllum_bipinnatifidum.; 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=l.; https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=shell+ginger+soil+.;https://dengarden.com/gardening/How-to-Prune-Variegated-Ginger

SHRIMP PLANT ('Red')
(*Justicia brandegeana*)
Acanthaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Mexico.
***Overview*:** Historically, *Justicia brandegeana* was used in Mexican gardens not only for its ornamental appeal but also for its ability to attract pollinators such as hummingbirds and butterflies. First formally described in the late 19th century, the plant caught the attention of botanists because of its vibrant, shrimp-like inflorescence, which gave it its common name. The species was named in honor of American botanist Townshend Stith Brandegee, who contributed significantly to the understanding of Mexican flora during his botanical explorations.
General Characteristics and Care: This plant has exceptional flower power and makes a beautiful display as a container plant specimen and in mixed container gardens as well as in the garden and landscape. The common Red Shrimp Plant, *Justicia brandegeana*, is a heat loving, naturally evergreen, bushy, tropical plant with dark olive-green foliage.
Zones: USDA Zones 9-11.
Exposure: It is both full sun and bright shade tolerant but tends to have the densest branching habit where it receives at least 4 hours or more of direct sunlight.
Soil: It does best in well-drained sandy or loamy soil, but is generally low maintenance and drought-tolerant. Shrimp plants generally prefer slightly acidic to neutral soil pH, ideally between 6.0 and 7.0.
Water: Should be kept average moist to moist (never soggy wet), with moderately fertile, well-drained soils.
Fertilizer: Shrimp Plant thrives with a balanced, water-soluble fertilizer during the growing season (spring through fall). Apply it every 4-6 weeks, but be mindful of over-fertilization, which can hinder blooming and cause excessive foliage. A 10-10-10 or fertilizer is recommended.
Bloom Period: Blooms from spring through fall, and even year-round in frost-free climates.
Flower Color: The flowers are white, extending from red bracts, which look somewhat like shrimps, hence the common name "shrimp flower."
Size: This plant grows to about 24" high by about 18" wide.
Toxicity: It is generally considered non-toxic to humans and pets.
Pruning: Pruning is best done in late spring or early summer, after the flowering period, to allow for recovery before dormancy. Dead or damaged branches, spent flowers, and leggy growth should be removed. Pinching back stem tips can encourage branching and a fuller appearance.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justicia_brandegeeana.; https://www.almostedenplants.com/shopping/products/620-red-shrimp-plant-false-hope-shrimp-plant-shrimp-bush/.; https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?kempercode=a522.

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

SPARKLER DAISY (African Daisy)
(*Osteospermum ecklonis 'Voltage Yellow'*)
Asteraceae

***Geographical Origin*:** *Osteospermum* species are native to southern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.
***Overview*:** High impact color with electrifying yellow blooms on a low growing plant that adds sparks to the garden. The first of the season to bloom and the last out of bloom. Mounding habit is great for adding non-stop color to garden beds. Perennial in frost-free climates; a warm-season annual in cooler regions.
General Characteristics and Care: Can be used as a border plant, in a container, along a driveway or other edge area, and is beautiful in a hanging basket. Easy to care for. Its species have been given several common names, including African daisy, South African daisy, Cape daisy and Blue-eyed daisy. Many species flower a second time late summer, stimulated by the cooler night temperatures. Hardy types show profuse flowering in the spring, but they do not get a second flush of flowers.
Zones: Best suited for USDA Zones 10a–11b, where it acts as an evergreen, heat-tolerant plant.
Exposure: Full sun.
Soil: Thrives in well-drained, moderately fertile soil with a slightly acidic to neutral pH (6.0-7.0).
Water: Water regularly to maintain slightly moist soil.
Fertilizer: Use a balanced, water-soluble, or slow-release fertilizer. A fertilizer formulated for flowering plants, with a slightly higher potassium and phosphorus ratio, is ideal to encourage flowering, rather than just foliage growth.
Bloom Period: Spring through Fall
Flower Color: Electric yellow.
Size: Fast growing; reaches 10 to 16 in. tall, 24 to 28 in. wide.
Toxicity: Non-toxic to pets and humans.
Pruning: Clip faded flower stems. May be lightly trimmed mid-season to rejuvenate for continued bloom.

Sources: https://www.monrovia.com/voltagetm-yellow-african-daisy-33253.html?srsltid=AfmBOoqdvKzWxOQngPPRALwnY3Cg8X0YG0Gl0ZdD9rX4NDlqyCNs4g70.; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osteospermum.; https://www.gardenia.net/guide/african-daisy-how-to-grow-and-care.

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 plats 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.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

SPURFLOWER
(*Plectranthis 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.;

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 grown (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 leave should be cut away for best appearance of the plant.

Sources: https://gardenerspath.com/plants/foliage/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://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

‘Sugarbelle’® [LB8-9] Tangelo
(*Citrus reticulata x Citrus x aurantium*)
Rutaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Citrus fruits originated in Southeast Asia, specifically the foothills of the Himalayas, over 8 million years ago. They spread throughout Asia, Melanesia, and Australia before migrating to the Middle East and the Mediterranean. The Sugarbelle® tangelo hybrid was developed in Florida by the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS).
***Overview*:** SugarBelle® (marketed as LB8-9) is a premium, early-season mandarin (tangerine) hybrid (*Citrus reticulata*), resulting from a cross between a Clementine mandarin and a Minneola tangelo. Known for its high tolerance to *citrus greening* (HLB), this, deep-orange, sweet-tart fruit is often called a "sugar-bell" due to its distinct, small neck or bell-like shape.
General Characteristics and Care: Has an intense, sweet, and tangy flavor with high juice content and a vibrant deep-orange color. Early season fruit, (November–January), 4–6 weeks earlier than Minneola. It is easy to peel, typically few to no seeds with proper management, and very aromatic. It has vigorous, upright growth, with good cold hardiness.
Zones: USDA Hardiness Zones 8-11**.** They are highly cold-hardy for a mandarin hybrid, often withstanding temperatures in the mid-teens or low 20s°F (around -8°C to -4°C) when mature.
Exposure: Full sun, partial shade.
Soil: SugarBelle® tangelos require well-draining, slightly acidic to neutral soil (pH 6.0–7.0), ideally sandy loam rich in organic matter. They thrive when planted slightly above ground level to ensure excellent drainage, preventing root rot. They need well-draining, sandy loam soil with a slightly acidic to neutral pH, specifically in the 6.0 to 7.0 range**.**
Water: Require consistent, deep watering for optimal growth and fruit production. Young trees need more frequent, regular hydration, while mature trees are more drought-tolerant.
Fertilizer: A balanced citrus-specific fertilizer (containing N, P, K, and micronutrients like iron, zinc, and magnesium) applied 3–6 times per year during the growing season (spring through early fall)
Flower Color and Bloom Period: Small white flowers in the spring.
Size: Generally grow to a mature height of 10 to 14 feet and a width of 8 to 10 feet**.**
Toxicity: Non-toxic, edible fruit.
Pruning: Keep the tree at a manageable height for harvesting by trimming tall branches. Focus on opening the center for light and air, removing vertical "water sprouts".

Sources: https://joshuacitrus.com/tangelos/sugar-belle-tangelos/.;https://www.emcocal.com/sugar-belle-citrus/.;https://www.fast-growing-trees.com/products/sugar-belle-mandarin.; https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/nfrec/2017/02/17/ufifas-evaluating-cold-hardy-citrus-varieties-for-the-panhandle/.

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://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

THRYALLIS
(*Galphimia glauca*)
Malpighiaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Mexico and Central America**.**
***Overview*:** Thryallis is also commonly known as Golden Thryallis, Rain of Gold, and Shower of Gold. While often confused with other species, it is frequently associated with eastern Mexico and is a popular, non-invasive, drought-tolerant shrub in warm regions like Florida.
General Characteristics and Care: This variety is great for foundation plantings, or shearing into low hedges; showy yellow flower clusters in fall, or sporadically all year in warmer areas; shiny light green leaves take on bronzy tones in cooler weather; excellent in containers as well. It can also be trained into a small, multi-trunked tree or pruned into a loose hedge.
Zones: It thrives in Central and South Florida, USDA Hardiness Zones 9-11.
Exposure: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Thryallis thrives in well-draining, slightly acidic to neutral soil, with an ideal pH range of 6.0 to 7.0**.**
Water: Likes dry to moist soil conditions.
Fertilizer: Requires very little fertilizer, often thriving without any in decent soil, and excessive feeding can reduce blooms. For best results, apply a balanced, slow-release fertilizer once in early spring. Over-fertilizing leads to weak, leggy growth, fewer flowers, and increased pest susceptibility.
Bloom Period: The plant can bloom in cycles all year round in the right conditions and under full sun, but mostly from early spring to the first frost.
Flower Color: The sweet-scented flowers are yellow in color.
Size: Will grow to 5-9’ tall and 4-6’ wide.
Toxicity: It is generally considered non-toxic to humans, dogs, and cats.
Pruning: Highly resilient and thrives with a hard pruning in late winter or early spring (March/April) to promote dense growth and heavy blooming on new wood. It can be cut back significantly, even to the ground if damaged by frost. Light trimming can be done throughout the summer to maintain shape or reduce height.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galphimia_glauca.; https://buchanansplants.com/plant-library/flowering-shrubs/thryallis/.;https://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/trees-and-shrubs/shrubs/thryallis/.

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 unsighly 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

TROPICANNA CANNA
(*Canna indica* 'Tropicanna')
Cannaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to tropical Americas. *Canna indica*, commonly called *achira* in Latin America, has been cultivated by Native Americans in tropical America for thousands of years, and was one of the earliest domesticated plants in the Americas.
***Overview*:** Cannas grow from swollen underground stems, correctly known as *rhizomes*, which store starch, and this is the main attraction of the plant to agriculture, having the largest starch grains of all plant life. *Canna* is the only member of the Liliopsida class (monocot group) in which hibernation of seed is known to occur, due to its hard, impenetrable seed covering. The name *Canna* originates from the Latin word for a cane or reed.
General Characteristics and Care: The plants are large tropical and subtropical herbaceous perennials with a rhizomatous rootstock. The broad, flat, alternate leaves that are such a feature of these plants, grow out of a stem in a long, narrow roll and then unfurl. The leaves are typically solid green, but some cultivars have smooth, brownish, maroon, or even variegated leaves.
Zones: USDA zones 7 through 10 but can be grown in zones 3-11 with proper care.
Exposure: Full sun.
Soil: Thrives in loose, nutrient-rich, evenly moist soils, but adaptable when established; can tolerate wet, poorly drained soils. Tropicanna Canna Lilies generally prefer slightly acidic to neutral soil with a pH range of 6.0 to 7.0. This pH range helps prevent root rot and promotes healthy growth for these plants.
Water: Keep soil consistently moist.
Fertilizer: A balanced, slow-release granular fertilizer with an NPK ratio like 10-10-10 is a good choice, applied in early spring.
Bloom Period: Summer to fall.
Flower Color: The flowers are typically red, orange, or yellow, or any combination of those colors, and are aggregated in inflorescences that are spikes or panicles.
Size: The wild species often grow to at least 2–3 m (6.6–9.8 ft) in height, but wide variation in size exists among cultivated plants.
Toxicity: Tropicanna canna lilies are generally considered non-toxic to humans and pets.
Pruning: Focus on removing spent flower stalks, yellowing or damaged leaves, and any dead or diseased foliage to encourage new growth and prevent disease.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canna_(plant).; https://www.monrovia.com/tropicanna-canna.html?srsltid=AfmBOorvgkV_PtAVJwEauIZYvO_5AAmt_tigKFIlZnXPunwsfSrh7gRa.; https://www.almanac.com/plant/cannas.

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; https://pfaf.org/user/Plant.aspx?LatinName=Veronica+officinalis; https://biogrow.blog/veronica-officinalis-plant-uses-and-properties/; https://www.minnesotawildflowers.info/flower/common-speedwell; https://plantaddicts.com/are-speedwell-poisonous/#:~:text=The%20Veronica%20genus%20of%20plants,for%20cats%2C%20dogs%20and%20livestock.;

Viburnum
(*Viburnum* spp.)
Adoxaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Viburnums are primarily native to the temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere, with significant species diversity found across Asia, North America, and Europe. While widely distributed, some species also extend into subtropical regions, including Southeast Asia, Malaysia, and montane areas of South America.
***Overview*:** The member species are evergreen or deciduous shrubs or (in a few cases) small trees. They are ideal for privacy screens, hedges, or specimen planting. One of the most versatile and reliable shrub families in the landscape.
General Characteristics and Care: Generally pest-resistant, although some varieties are susceptible to the viburnum leaf beetle. Low-maintenance. If improperly cared for or severely stressed by drought, they may become more susceptible. Attracts bees, butterflies, and bords. It is showy, with flowers, fruit, and berries.
Zones: USDA zones 2-10.
Exposure: Thrives in full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Adaptable to many soil types (chalk, clay, loam, sand) but prefers rich, well-drained soil. A soil pH of 5.5 to 6.5 is ideal.
Water: Water regularly during the first 1–2 years. Then keep soil moist but not soggy.
Fertilizer: An annual application of a balanced, slow-release formula (like 10-10-10) in early spring promotes optimal growth and flowering. Avoid over-fertilizing, as excess nitrogen reduces blooms.
Bloom Period: They usually bloom in spring or early summer, although the timing can vary depending on the species.
Flower Color: Each flower is white, cream or pink, small (3–5mm across), and has five petals. Some species are strongly fragrant.
Size: Height: 2-30'; Spread: 2-12'.
Toxicity: Most Viburnum species are generally considered non-toxic to humans and pets, with many producing edible berries, though some varieties (e.g., *V. opulus*) can cause mild vomiting if ingested in large quantities.
Pruning: Prune just after flowering in spring to maintain shape, as they bloom on old wood.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viburnum.; https://www.gardenia.net/guide/viburnum-how-to-grow-and-care-with-success.; https://naturehills.com/blogs/garden-blog/nature-hills-top-5-amazing-viburnum-shrubs-and-their-care?srsltid=AfmBOopkN4GLCE7LpWBDqAF-vJN1A2hcAWozD64lFtnE7pwwXwAzdJGC.

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/cathranthus-roseus-periwinkle-vinca;

WISHBONE FLOWER (Torenia)
(*Torenia fournieri*)
Linderniaceae

***Geographical Origin*:** Native to Asia, specifically the tropical and subtropical regions of Indochina and southern China.
***Overview*:** *Torenia* is a genus of plants now classified in the family Linderniaceae. Torenia was formerly classified in the figwort family, Scrophulariaceae. Often called wishbone flowers, or Bluewings; in Hawaii they are called Nanioola'a or Ola'a Beauty. Some species are grown as garden plants. The genus name is given in honor of Swedish botanist Olaf Toren (1718-1753), who was chaplain of the Swedish East India Company in the mid-1700s.
General Characteristics and Care: This plant will bloom profusely during the warm months and will return annually from seed after the winter. It throws considerable seed so can be invasive, but the reseeding may be beneficial in gardens to replace spent plants or fill in empty spaces.
Zones: Hardy in USDA zones 10 and 11.
Exposure: It prefers part sun to shade, especially in hot summer climates. It is excellent when combined with shade plants, such as Impatiens, because of its shade tolerance.
Soil: Plant in rich moist soils and mulch to help keep the roots cool. Torenia prefers rich, loamy, moist and well-drained soil. The plant is not particular about soil pH, but it does best in a soil that is slightly acidic.
Water: Water when the top inch or so of soil feels dry to the touch. During hot weather, they may need daily watering to prevent wilt.
Fertilizer: A balanced, slow-release fertilizer with an NPK ratio around 10-10-10 or 20-20-20 is generally recommended.
Bloom Period: Wishbone flowers typically bloom throughout the summer and into the fall, until the first frost.
Flower Color: Colors can range from white with yellow throats to violet, blue, cobalt, lavender and purple.
Size: Height: 0 ft. 6 in.-1 ft. 6 in.; Width: 0 ft. 6 in.-0 ft. 8 in.
Toxicity: Wishbone flowers are generally considered non-toxic to humans, including children, and are safe for pets.
Pruning: Wishbone flowers are low-maintenance and don't require extensive pruning. They are self-cleaning, meaning they naturally shed spent flowers. However, to encourage bushier growth or shape the plant, light pruning can be beneficial.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torenia.; https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/torenia-fournieri/.; https://www.atozflowers.com/flower/torenia/.; https://greg.app/wishbone-flower-toxic-to-humans/.; https://www.thespruce.com/growing-wishbone-flower-torenia-1402918.

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 named 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.terramatergardens.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