

HOME GROUNDS FACT SHEET



Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Nassau County



Horticulture Center
Demonstration & Community Gardens
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Flowering Houseplants

Bromeliads

e.g. *Vriesia*, *Cryptanthus*, *Billbergia*, *Aechmea*

Excellent family of indoor plants for medium light areas. Pot in a well drained, light medium containing bark or coarse peat. Keep soil mix damper than for most plants and keep the reservoir at the base of the leaves filled with water. Be sure to change water in reservoir weekly.



Achimenes

Bloom from spring to early summer and through the fall. After they bloom, give them reduced light and water so tops will die-back to the ground. Store dormant rhizomes at 60°F over winter (can be left in pots). In spring, start to grow and/or propagate by dividing tiny rhizomes and gradually increasing water and light. During growing season, give care similar to that for African Violets.

Lipstick Plant

Aeschynanthus obconicus

A hanging member of the Gesneriad (African Violet) family. See fact sheet on African Violet Culture, A-1-4.

Zebra Plant *Apelandra squarrosa*

A very popular but difficult plant to grow indoors. No matter how adequate the growing conditions, lower leaves will always fall, especially after bloom. High humidity and variable requirements for soil moisture, depending on the time of year, make this a tough one to keep healthy-looking. Best to start new plants from tip cuttings that develop soon after the faded flower spike is cut off.

Flowering Maple *Abutilon* sp.

Two types, trailing and bushy, with maple-shaped leaves; some varieties have yellow and green variegated foliage. Beautiful flowers, shaped like a single hollyhock blossom. Requires bright light and be sure to keep the soil barely moist but not soggy. Prefers ample humidity. Cool night temperatures are preferred (55-60°F).

Camellia

Don't attempt to grow this plant unless you can provide temperatures averaging 45-50°F during the winter months.

Citrus e.g. Calamondin Orange, 'Otaheite' Orange, Ponderosa Lemon

Any member of the Citrus family will perform well if given high light and cool night temperatures around 50-55°F. When grown indoors, flowers must be pollinated or no fruit will result. Watch out for scale insects. Consult fact sheet A-1-28.

Columnnea

A hanging member of the Gesneriad (African Violet) family. See fact sheet on African violet culture, A-1-4.

Glory Bower *Clerodendron* sp.

Best grown in a sunny window during the growing months (March-September). Keep soil barely moist. Prefers temperatures around 65°F with average humidity. As this plant grows, make sure it has a support around which to climb.

Crown of Thorns *Euphorbia splendens*

A free-flowering succulent available in shades of orange, white and pink.

A-1-3 DWM:cms reviewed RT 1/03

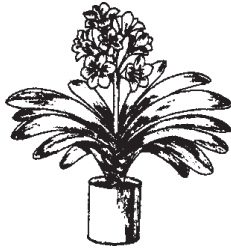
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Kaffir Lily *Clivia miniata*

Long, leather-like leaves with orange-red flowers, followed by ornamental red berries. Propagated by seed or division. Grow outdoors in the summer in the light shade; water and fertilize regularly. Bring the plant in the first of September and let it rest in a cool (45-55°F) area until mid-January. Water very little. Then move into a sunny, warm location (65°F). Begin watering and fertilizing regularly.



Cape Primrose *Streptocarpus* sp.

Grows best in an East or West window. Keep soil barely moist and provide average humidity. Temperatures should be between 55-70°F. Prefers a loose organic potting soil. Culture is similar to African violets, except *Streptocarpus* can tolerate cooler temperatures.

Flame-of-the-Woods *Ixora* sp.

East Indian evergreen shrub with dense clusters of tubular flowers. Many color varieties are available. Temperatures between 65-75°F in an East-West exposure are preferred. Needs average humidity and keep the soil moist. Avoid drafts. Dwarf form also available.

Flame Violet *Episcia* sp.

Trailing tropical plant with brilliant foliage and colorful flowers. Grows best in an East-West exposure with temperatures between 65-70°F. They thrive on high humidity; be sure to keep soil barely moist. Other cultural requirements are similar to African violets.

Gardenia

Extremely difficult to get this plant to rebloom. It requires plenty of light and humidity. Night temperature must be 62-65°F for the plant to initiate buds. Daytime temperatures should be 70-75°F. Night temperatures above 65°F increases the possibility of bud drop. Prefers a slightly acid soil. Fertilize during the growing months with an appropriate fertilizer.

Hibiscus

New introductions of hibiscus are available. Successful indoor culture includes a bright, sunny location, soil that is moist but not soggy and nighttime temperatures above 55°F. It is natural for the hibiscus to take a brief rest from blooming during the winter months.

Orchid Cactus

Nopalxochia (Epiphyllum ackermanni)

Huge, colorful flower resembling water lilies; comes in many beautiful colors. Tolerates an East-West exposure. During the growing months keep the soil barely moist. During the winter let the plant rest for 2-3 months, allowing the soil to remain dry.

Orchids

***Cattleya, Phalaenopsis* and other warm-temperature orchids**

Warm night temperature 65-70°F. Orchids can do well in a sunny window with high humidity and very loose, airy potting mixture (bark, coarse peat, osmunda fiber, etc.). Water thoroughly before the growing medium dries out. Air circulation imperative.

African Violet *Saintpaulia* sp.

African violets prefer a temperature range of 65-70°F at night, increasing during the day. Soil should be kept evenly moist but not saturated. Insufficient light may cause plant not to bloom. During the winter months, locate African violet in a west or south window. At the other times, locate the plant where bright indirect light is available. See fact sheet A-1-4 for additional information.



Shrimp Plant

Justicia brandegeana (Beleperone)

Colorful salmon bracts persist for long periods of time. Pinch back plants to keep bushy. Requires high light and dry soil between waterings. The cooler the night temperature, the better (60°F or less).

Many flowering plants are sold as houseplants that have a limited value; once the bloom fades, the plants are not worth the space they occupy. Enjoy them while they are in bloom and then discard them:

- Browallia
- Calceolaria
- Chrysanthemum (*florist types*)
- Cineraria
- Cyclamen (*see fact sheet A-1-13*)
- Easter Lily
- Exacum
- Hydrangea (*see fact sheet D-1-9*)
- Poinsettia (*see fact sheet A-1-13*)