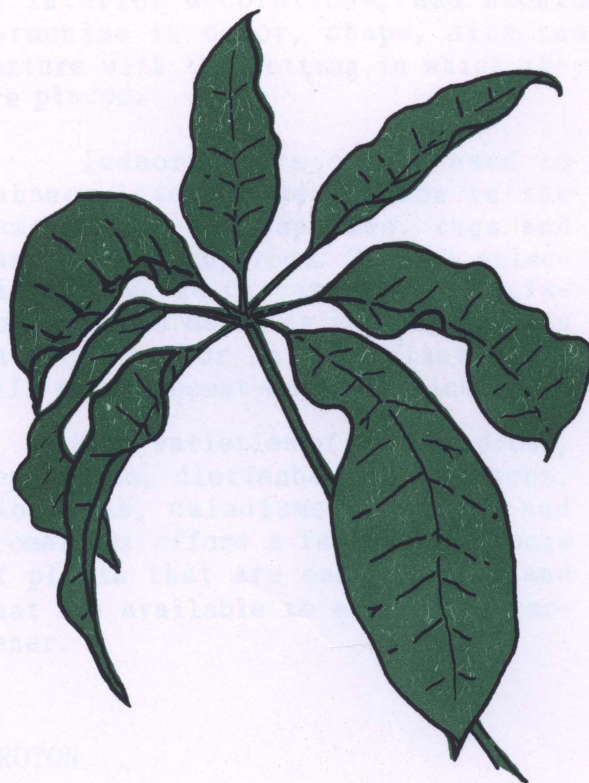
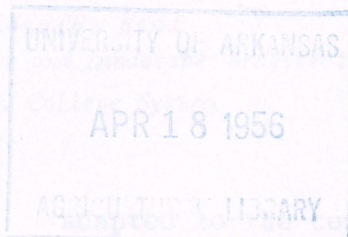


Foliage Plants in the Home

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in the home



TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

G. G. GIBSON, DIRECTOR, COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

Foliage Plants in the Home

A. F. DEWERTH, Head

Department of Floriculture and Landscape Architecture

Texas A. & M. College System

FOLIAGE PLANTS are important to everyday living. Their care is so simple and easy that no home or building should be without one or more of them.

Most foliage plants are ornamental herbaceous perennials characteristic of the tropics and are grown for their ornamental foliage. Some also bear attractive flowers.

The space allotted by modern designers to built-in window boxes, interior garden areas, islands and ledges is a partial indication of how much living plants mean to many people.

Patios and walled gardens also are a definite trend in the site development about modern homes. They practically make the garden a part of the house and use planter boxes and tubbed specimen plants. Such continuous use of garden areas in everyday life makes it highly desirable to select the plants to be used with utmost care. Large-leaved foliage plants are especially suitable for this purpose.

The increase in the apartment-type dwelling in urban areas also has increased the demand for durable, less spectacular, small planters and potted foliage plants.

VALUE AND USE OF FOLIAGE PLANTS

House plants should be selected for their attractive appearance and lasting qualities. They should be

adapted to the conditions which exist in modern homes and buildings, such as fluorescent lighting, central heating and air conditioning, but also should be a part of the general scheme of interior decorations, and should harmonize in color, shape, size and texture with the setting in which they are placed.

Indoor plants can be used to enhance interior decoration in the same manner as draperies, rugs and furniture in any room. Careful selection means the discarding of old favorites such as ferns and begonias in favor of new or untried plants that will pass present-day qualifications.

Many varieties of philodendrons, peperomias, dieffenbachias, crotons, alocacias, caladiums, episcias and bromeliads afford a fascinating range of plants that are easy to grow and that are available to any indoor gardener.

CROTON

Many modern homes require focal points of live plants that have rich coloring. The leading colorful foliage plant is the croton. This plant sometimes has a reputation of being temperamental under house conditions, but when its requirements are understood it can be readily adapted to interior decoration.

Crotons need a warm temperature (60 degrees F.), light and moisture. At temperatures below 50 degrees F. or in a dry atmosphere they will drop

their lower leaves. They require light to retain their high color. A location in a bright, east or south window is ideal. When used in plant boxes, interior plant beds or large tubs, humidity will be satisfactory. New leaves are always green on these plants, coloring as they reach maturity.

When individual plants are used in pots, place them in saucers filled with damp sand. This helps maintain moisture and humidity around the plants.

CALADIUM

Another highly colored plant that lends itself to interior decoration where color is desired is the fancy-leaved caladium. This plant is brightly colored and has large heart-shaped or "elephant ear" leaves. The same conditions are necessary to keep its high color as for the croton.

EPISCIAS

The episcias form a group of small plants that provide colorful effects for use on coffee tables or small areas in shadier locations of the room.

They do well in the same locations that are suitable for African Violets. They need filtered light or shade and constant moisture, which can be provided by placing the pots in saucers filled with moist sand. They also should be fed a liquid fertilizer about once a month. Unlike the crotons and fancy-leaved caladiums, they do not need bright sunlight to bring out the colors in the foliage.

These small plants, about the size of African Violets, trail and make runners with small plants attached that hang gracefully over the edges or rims of the pots. They should be kept warm like the crotons and caladiums. The leaves discolor quickly at low temperatures of 50 degrees F.,

especially when they touch the cold container in which they are growing.

ALOCASIAS

The alocasias have leaves similar in shape to the fancy-leaved caladiums, but they produce cool, metallic colors rather than the rich warm colors. The leaves are copper, purple, gunmetal or aluminum, and some also have scalloped or indented leaf edges.

They require warm temperatures and shade. They grow well in interior plant boxes and beds, and the leaves become extremely large. They need room, and are especially good for large interior accent or tropical effects. In the South they are especially well suited for tubs and patio plantings.

PHILODENDRONS

Perhaps the most versatile foliage plants for use in interior decoration today are the various types of philodendron. There is a kind for almost every purpose.

The large-leaved sorts are ideal for totem poles and trained specimens, such as *Philodendron hastatum*, *mandianum* and *dubia*. The most trustworthy vine for interior decoration in any situation is *Philodendron cordatum*.

Philodendron lacineatum and *Philodendron squamiferum* have interesting leaf patterns. The lobed leaves of these specimens are actually modernistic in design. Another smaller-leaved climber with this "modernistic" leaf pattern and growth habit is a relative newcomer called *Philodendron guttiferum*.

The self-heading or non-climbing *Philodendron* species are among the most practical house plants available. They have the endurance and adaptation of the climbing types, without the requirement of providing a support for their continued growth.

The best of these are *Philodendron wendlandi*, *Philodendron selloum*, *Philodendron fosterianum* and *Philodendron pinnatifidum*. They grow equally well in shady or sunny locations, and *Philodendron selloum* is well adapted to patio plantings in the South, as it withstands temperatures of 38 to 40 degrees F. without injury.

BROMELIADS

Bromeliads are especially well adapted to present-day interior decoration. Their foliage is of a tough leathery nature and these plants grow so that the leaves can hold water in their centers, and thus do not dry out readily, or are not as susceptible to low humidity as other foliage plants. The plants grow in light or shade, but the colors are more intense in sunny locations.

Most of the plants in this group can stand cooler temperatures but they cannot be exposed to freezing weather.

The color patterns in the foliage of the various species of Bromeliads include stripes, blotches or patches. They actually present a sculptured appearance and are ideally suited to interior decoration where conditions are especially trying or where the interior decoration is contemporary.

GREEN PLANTS

If green plants are preferred to the more exotic or spectacular plants mentioned above, there are many new and different foliage plants available that lend themselves especially well to interior decoration in homes and buildings.

They are just as adaptable and durable as the common species and are much more interesting. These plants offer a diversity for even the most conservative indoor gardener.

WATERING PLANTS IN THE HOME

Most Texas homes are heated by gas heat, which tends to produce dryness in the air and to release some toxic gases. The same is true of steam and hot-air heating systems. This moisture deficiency is soon followed by dryness in the soil, stunting of the plants and hardening of the stems.

HUMIDIFIERS

A shallow rust-proof pan about 1½ inches deep, filled with 1 inch of small stones or gravel and supplied with enough water to wet the bottom thoroughly, provides a receptacle for holding the potted plants and at the same time increases the humidity by means of evaporation. Excessive moisture is undesirable. Water allowed to collect in the pan so that the base of the pot is covered prohibits entrance of oxygen to the roots and sickly plants result.

Wetting the foliage frequently with a spray gun or atomizer is another method of reducing excessive evaporation of moisture around plants. An occasional bath is beneficial to most plants. A film of dust frequently settles on the leaves, clogs the breathing pores or stomata and thus hinders growth. Only a thorough washing on a bright day can remove this accumulation.

SOIL MOISTURE

The amount of moisture in the soil is equally as important as humidity. Too little water produces stunted plants with small leaves which later fall off. Too much water causes the tips of the leaves to turn brown and die, and with plants such as Cyclamen or Primroses it will induce rot at the crown. Excess watering also causes the lower buds to drop or fail to open and very often a severe loss of foliage results.

Watering and the function of soil moisture in relation to plant growth are perhaps the most perplexing questions confronted in growing plants in the home. The moisture in the soil acts as a solvent for the essential nutrients. When too much water is applied, all the pore spaces between the soil particles become filled with water. This prevents entrance of oxygen into the soil, which is necessary to develop roots and to maintain other physiological functions of the plant.

Some plants require more water than others. The type of plant (flowering or foliage), the season of the year, soil types and atmospheric conditions all play an important part in determining the proper frequency of watering. All plants require some rest each year, at which time they should be watered sparingly.

The following suggestions should prove helpful in watering plants:

1. Observe plants daily. Plants should never be allowed to wilt for want of water.
2. By scratching the soil to the depth of about an inch, one can tell whether the soil needs additional water. If the soil puddles or lumps when rolled between the thumb and finger, no water is needed. If the soil crumbles or pulverizes, it is time to water.
3. Tap the pot lightly with a knife handle or the knuckles. If a dry ring or hollow sound results, the soil is dry. If the response to the tap is a dull thud, sufficient water is present.
4. When plants require water, water thoroughly. Avoid frequent light sprinklings. The roots usually penetrate to the bottom of the pots. Unless the soil is soaked thoroughly, the lower roots will suffer. Light watering induces root growth near the surface.

5. Plants in small pots require more frequent watering than those in large pots. All plants require more water during sunny days than on dull days. Water all newly repotted plants sparingly until they become established.

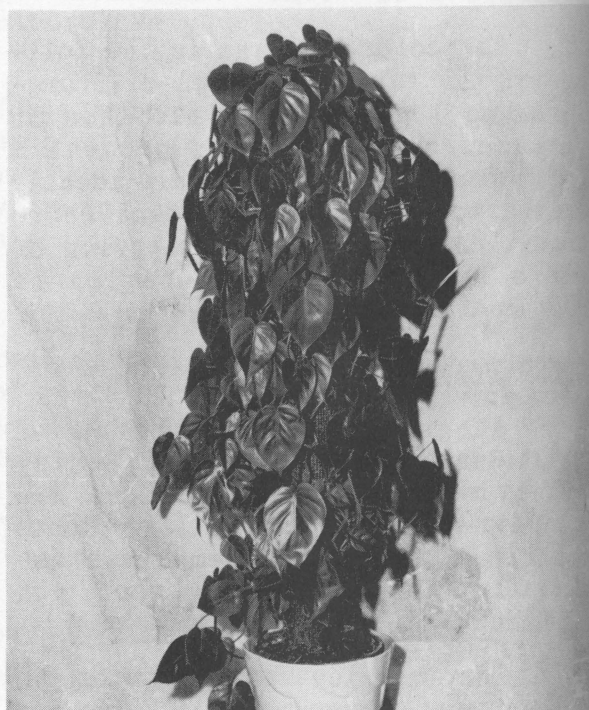
6. Avoid using water which is hot or cold. Water at room temperature is best for all plants.

7. Rapidly growing plants, such as cinerarias, ferns, begonias, fuschias and palms, require more water than the slower-growing foliage plants and succulents.

8. Early morning is the best time to water plants.

9. Poor drainage and placing the plants in jardinières, or other receptacles which hold excessive water around the pot, should be avoided.

10. If daily watering is insufficient, repot the plants into larger containers and leave space at the top of the pot for water.



Philodendron cordatum - trained as a totem pole.

RECOMMENDED FOLIAGE PLANTS

Grouped under seven general headings, the following foliage plants are recommended for Texas homes.

SCIENTIFIC NAME

COMMON NAME

I. PLANTS THAT WILL GROW IN WATER

<i>Aglaonema modestum</i>	Chinese Evergreen
<i>Crassula arborescens</i>	Jade Plant
<i>Dieffenbachia</i> (all varieties)	Dumbcane
<i>Hedera helix</i> (all varieties)	English Ivy
<i>Hemigraphis colorata</i>	Hemigraphis
<i>Nephtytis afzeli</i>	Arrowhead
<i>Scindapsus aureus</i>	Devil's Ivy
<i>Tradescantia</i> (all varieties)	Wandering Jew

II. PLANTS THAT WILL WITHSTAND MOST ADVERSE HOUSE CONDITIONS AND ABUSE

<i>Aglaonema modestum</i>	Chinese Evergreen
<i>Aspidistra elatior</i>	Iron Plant
<i>Cissus rhombifolia</i>	Grape Ivy
<i>Crassula arborescens</i>	Jade Plant
<i>Dieffenbachia amoena</i>	Dumbcane
<i>Dracaena fragrans massange</i>	Dracaena
<i>Euphorbia mili</i>	Crown of Thorns
<i>Ficus elastica</i>	Indian Rubber
<i>Ficus pandurata</i>	Fiddleleaf Fig
<i>Hemigraphis colorata</i>	Hemigraphis
<i>Howea belmoreana</i>	Kentia Palm
<i>Nephtytis afzeli</i>	Arrowhead
<i>Pandanus vietchi</i>	Screwpine
<i>Paradisea liliastrium</i>	Paradise Lily
<i>Peperomia obtusifolium</i>	Peperomia
<i>Philodendron cordatum</i>	Philodendron
<i>Sansevieria trifasciata laurenti</i>	Goldenstripe Sansevieria
<i>Sansevieria zeylanica</i>	Snakeplant
<i>Scindapsus aureus</i>	Devil's Ivy

III. PLANTS THAT DO WELL UNDER AVERAGE HOME CONDITIONS

<i>Acanthus montanus</i>	Mountain Acanthus
<i>Aechmea calyculata</i>	Aechmea
<i>Aechmea orlandiana</i>	Aechmea
<i>Auracaria excelsa</i>	Norfolk Island Pine
<i>Asparagus sprengeri</i>	Sprenger Asparagus
<i>Begonia aconitifolia</i>	Begonia

Begonia ulmifolia
Beleperone guttata
Caladium bicolor

Cissus antarctica
Cissus rhombifolia
Cordyline australis
Cryptanthus acaulis
Cyrtomium falcatum
Dieffenbachia bausei
Dieffenbachia picta
Dieffenbachia picta

Rudolph Roehrs
Fatsia japonica
Fatsihedera lizei
Ficus benghalensis
Ficus eburnea
Ficus religiosa
Grevillea robusta
Hedera helix and varieties

Nephtytis Emerald Gem
Peperomia clusifolia
Peperomia crassifolia

Peperomia obtusifolia variegated
Peperomia pericata
Peperomia sandersi
Philodendron cordatum
Philodendron dubia
Philodendron erubescens
Philodendron giganteum
Philodendron imbe
Philodendron scandens
Philodendron selloum
Philodendron tripartitum
Philodendron wendlandi

Pilea involucrata
Piper nigrum
Piper ornatum

Polyscias balfouri
Polyscias filicifolia
Polyscias paniculata
Rhoeo discolor

Sansevieria hahni
Sansevieria parva
Sansevieria subspicata

Saxifraga sarmentosa
Schizmatoglottis picta
Scindapsus nitens
Scolopendrium cristata
Spathyphyllum clevelandi
Vanilla planifolium

Elm-leaved Caladium
Shrimp Plant
Fancy-leaved Caladium

Kangaroo Vine
Grape Ivy
Giant Dracaena
Cryptanthus
Holly Fern
Dumbcane
Dumbcane

Dumbcane
Japanese Fatsia
Botanical Wonder
Banyan Fig
Ivory Fig
Botree Fig
Silk Oak

English Ivy
Arrowhead
Rededge Peperomia
Leatherleaf Peperomia
Variegated Peperomia
Coinleaf Peperomia
Watermelon Peperomia
Heartleaf Philodendron

Giant Philodendron
Redleaf Philodendron
Trilleaf Philodendron

Artillery Plant
Black Pepper
Celebes Pepper
Balfour Aralia
Fernleaf Aralia
Jagged leaf Aralia
Three Men in a Boat
Hadn't Sansevieria
Parva Sansevieria
Rededge Sansevieria
Strawberry Begonia
Painted Tongue
Cutleaf Devil's Ivy
Hart's Tongue Fern
White Anthurium
Vanilla

IV. PLANTS THAT WITHSTAND DRY, WARM LOCATIONS

<i>Bromeliads - all species and varieties</i>	
<i>Cacti - all species and varieties</i>	
<i>Euphorbia mili</i>	Crown of Thorns
<i>Pedilanthus tithymaloides</i>	Slipper Flower
<i>Peperomia obtusifolia</i>	Peperomia
<i>Pereskia aculeata</i>	Leafy cactus
<i>Rhoeo discolor</i>	Three Men in a Boat
<i>Sansevierias in variety</i>	
<i>Scindapsus aureus</i>	Devil's Ivy
<i>Tradescantia</i>	Wandering Jew

V. PLANTS WELL SUITED FOR LARGE-TUBBED DECORATIVE SPECIMENS

<i>Acanthus mollis</i>	Artists Acanthus
<i>Acanthus montanus</i>	Mountain Acanthus
<i>Alocasia cuprea</i>	Giant Caladium
<i>Alsophila australis</i>	Australian Tree Fern
<i>Codiaeum variegatum</i>	Croton
<i>Dieffenbachia amoena</i>	Spotted Dumbcane
<i>Fatshedera japonica</i>	Botanical Wonder
<i>Fatsia japonica</i>	Japan Fatsia
<i>Ficus eburnea</i>	Ivory Fig
<i>Ficus elastica variegated</i>	Variegated India Rubber
<i>Ficus pandurata</i>	Fiddleleaf Fig
<i>Monstera deliciosa</i>	Cutleaf Philodendron
<i>Pandanus vietchi</i>	Screwpine
<i>Philodendron dubia</i>	
<i>Philodendron giganteum</i>	
<i>Philodendron sellowm</i>	
<i>Polyscias paniculata</i>	Jagged-leaf Aralia
<i>Schefflera digitata</i>	Schefflera
<i>Strelitzia reginae</i>	Bird of Paradise

VI. VINES AND TRAILING PLANTS FOR TOTEM POLES AND TRAINED PLANTS

<i>Cissus antarctica</i>	Kangaroo Vine
<i>Cissus discolor</i>	Begonia Cissus
<i>Cissus nijegerensis</i>	Pink Cissus
<i>Cissus rhombifolia</i>	Grape Ivy
<i>Clerodendron balfouri</i>	Bleedingheart
	Glorybower
<i>Ficus pumila</i>	Creeping Fig
<i>Hemigraphis colorata</i>	Hemigraphis
<i>Hoya carnosa</i>	Wax Plant
<i>Monstera deliciosa</i>	Cutleaf Philodendron
<i>Nephtytis afzeli</i>	Arrowhead
<i>Pellionia dauveana</i>	Pellionia
<i>Pellionia pulchra</i>	Satin Pellionia
<i>Philodendrons - all climbing types</i>	
<i>Piper nigrum</i>	Black Pepper
<i>Piper ornatum</i>	Celebes Pepper
<i>Scindapsus aureus</i>	Devil's Ivy
<i>Stephanotis floribunda</i>	Stephanotis
<i>Scindapsus pictus</i>	Painted Devil's Ivy

VII. LOW CREEPING PLANTS FOR GROUND COVERS IN INTERIOR PLANTING BOXES

<i>Episcia cupreata</i>	Episcia
<i>Ficus pumila</i>	Creeping Fig
<i>Ficus radicans</i>	Climbing Fig
<i>Fittonia vershaffelti</i>	
<i>Silvernerve</i>	Silver Fittonia
<i>Hedera helix Hahns Star</i>	Hahn's Star English Ivy
	Ivy
<i>Helxine soleiroi</i>	Baby's Tears
<i>Hemigraphis colorata</i>	Hemigraphis
<i>Pellionia dauveana</i>	Pellionia