

The information offered here is to help gardeners grow ornamental plants and herbs successfully in St. Tammany Parish home gardens. Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information, but references should always be checked, and LSU AgCenter personnel contacted if there are questions.

Ornamentals & Herbs

An Essential Guide



Photo by J Blazek

Introduction

This information was initially collated by Paul Andres, a Louisiana Master Gardener, as a quick guide for creating a successful and beautiful garden in St Tammany Parish. Use this guide when planning new gardens or considering purchases of new plants for existing gardens. Copy pages to give to your friends when you share your pass-along plants. Requirements for each plant, such as amount of sunlight, shade, water needs, propagation and soil types are included along with much more information. Additions and updates from other master gardeners are welcomed and can be submitted to Jamie Blazek at info@stmastergardener.org.

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Agapanthus (Agapanthus spp)



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Type of plant:	An herbaceous perennial monocot
Origin:	Southern Africa
AKA:	Love flower, Lily of the Nile, African Lily
Purpose:	A showy flower cluster, for border areas or centers
Growth size:	3 to 6 feet tall and 3 to 4 feet wide
Light:	Full sunlight
Temperature:	Dies back with freeze, some damage below 20 F
Soil:	Most types of soil are acceptable
Fertilizer:	Grows well with no fertilizer.
Water:	Drought resistant' does not like "wet feet"
Growth hints:	Split rhizome after 3 or 4 years
Unique properties:	Considered an invasive weed in some areas
Pests & problems:	Mild toxicity, not a true lily
Propagation:	Split rhizomes for propagation

Amaryllis (Amaryllis spp)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	A bulbous flowering plant
Origin:	Native to southern Africa, Central and South America
AKA:	Belladonna lily, Jersey lily, Naked lady, Amarillo
Purpose:	Ornamental border plant or central focus
Growth size:	Leaves 3 inches wide by 18 to 24 inches long; Flower stem 12 to 18 inches tall with several flowers on each stem.
Light:	Full sun. If planted in a container, rotate the container so plant does not lean one way.
Temperature:	Blooms best with temperatures over 60 F. Freeze tolerant down to 10 F.
Soil:	Light, rich well drained soil; plant with 1/3 of bulb exposed.
Fertilizer:	Once leaves appear, fertilize with balanced product, then monthly through the spring.
Water:	Water when top 1 inch of soil is dry; do not over water.
Growth hints:	Plant bulbs in containers about 8 to 10 weeks before blooms are desired; keep dry and cool before planting.
Propagation:	Split bulbs about every 3 to 4 years when planted in the ground,

Angelonia (*Angelonia angustifolia*)



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Type of plant:	Tender perennial
Origin:	Found from Mexico to Brazil in arid or semiarid areas and the West Indies
AKA:	Summer snapdragon
Purpose:	Grown as a decorative plant and for pollinators
Growth size:	Grows 12 to 18 inches high
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Exceptional heat and humidity tolerance
Soil:	Use average to well-drained soil.
Water:	Low water needs. Provide good drainage.
Growth hints:	Pinching or pruning will delay flowering and make plant unattractive.
Unique properties:	Requires little maintenance.
Propagation:	Start from cuttings.

Arrowhead (Syngonium podophyllum)



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Type of plant:	A hardy vine that can grow outdoors, but most often used as a container house plant
Origin:	Native to tropical West Africa
AKA:	Arrowhead vine, American evergreen, Nephthytis
Purpose:	Evergreen house plant, ground cover
Growth size:	Grows to 12 to 18 inches tall with long vines
Light:	Bright to shaded light; avoid strong direct sun and deep shade
Temperature:	Average home temperatures are good; usually recovers from a light freeze
Soil:	Rich, well-drained soils
Fertilizer:	Light fertilizing during growing season; none during winter
Water:	Water as soon as soil dries out. Keep moist but avoid “wet feet” and root rot. Likes humid conditions, so mist leaves if in the house
Growth hints:	Keep vines cut to promote bushiness
Unique properties:	Mild toxicity: sap can cause skin irritation
Propagation:	Propagate with stem or root cuttings

Asparagus Fern (Asparagus aethiopicus)



Google image

Type of plant:	Annual
Origin:	Native to South Africa
AKA:	Sprenger's asparagus
Purpose:	Ornamental house plant adaptable to warmer outside gardens
Growth size:	Up to 2 feet high and 6 feet wide
Light:	Indirect light indoors. Partial shade outdoors
Temperature:	Prefers warm to hot areas. Protect below 40 F
Soil:	Use loose, well-drained soil
Fertilizer:	Use dilute liquid fertilizer
Water:	Keep plant hydrated and humid. Do not allow to dry out
Growth hints:	Considered aggressive and an invasive species
Unique properties:	Although this looks like a fern, it is a type of lily
Pests & problems:	Poisonous to pets and people
Propagation:	Propagate by splitting root clusters; look for "pups" breaking off main bulb

Asparagus Bean (Vigna unguiculata subsp)



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Type of plant:	Annual vegetable
Origin:	Africa
AKA:	Chinese long bean, Yard long bean
Purpose:	Edible
Growth size:	8 to 12 feet tall vines
Light:	Prefers full sun
Temperature:	Likes hot temperature. Dies back below 40 F.
Soil:	Dry sandy soil
Fertilizer:	Does not need fertilizer because they fix their own nitrogen.
Water:	Do not over water, usually once per week
Growth hints:	Long vines need trellis or bamboo teepee.
Unique properties:	Pick pods before seeds are too prominent.
Pests & problems:	Aphids on new plants. Wildlife is attracted to new growth.
Propagation:	Sow seeds directly into ground after last frost.

Azalea (Rhododendron spp.)



Photo by J Blazek

Type of plant:	Woody perennial shrub
Origin:	Some deciduous azaleas are native to North America; most evergreen azaleas are native to Asia or Japan
Purpose:	Hedges and borders; deep green background plants
Growth size:	Grows to 7-25 feet tall, 5-10 feet wide. Dwarf varieties grow to about 2 feet in height
Light:	Partial to full shade; a few varieties tolerate full sun
Temperature:	Zones 5 through 9
Soil:	Acidic well-drained rich soil
Fertilizer:	Fertilize lightly <u>after</u> plants are established and following their blooms. Use half as much as the label recommends. Use compost or organic supplements.
Water:	Mulching well all year long helps retain moisture, not drought tolerant
Growth hints:	Trim bushes after they bloom and up until July when the following year's blooms set.
Unique properties:	Hardy once established
Pests & problems:	Poisonous to children and pets, all parts but especially flowers and nectar Datana major G&R caterpillar found on azaleas usually July through August. Treat with Bt spray.
Propagation:	Stem cuttings or lay branch on the ground with cover to encourage root growth.

Banana Plant (Musa spp)



Photo by J Blazek

Type of plant:	Herbaceous flowering plant
Origin:	Native to Southeast Asia
AKA:	Banana tree, plantain tree
Purpose:	Ornamental plant, fruit producing crop
Growth size:	Different cultivars vary from 2 to 25 feet
Light:	Full sunlight
Temperature:	Most varieties are warm natured, some are cold tolerant and do well in St Tammany Parish. To avoid frost damage, stalks can be cut down to about 1 foot. Then cover with a plastic pot or mulch. (It takes a couple of growing seasons for a stalk to produce a flower and fruit. If flower and fruit is what you want, do not trim the stalk down.)
Soil:	Well-drained acidic soil
Fertilizer:	Fertilize monthly during growing season with 3-1-6 product
Water:	Requires lots of water: 2 to 3 inches weekly
Growth hints:	Leaves need protection from wind damage. Prune leaves that are brown only up to the stalk, not all the way down to the ground. Pruning the entire leaf layer to the ground will result in a weakened stalk that may fall in high winds. A stalk will produce flower and fruit only once. A stalk that has flowered can be cut back to thin the plant grouping and to avoid unwanted spreading.
Unique properties:	Not a true tree, the world's largest herb, do not use herbicides near banana plants
Propagation:	Plants produce "pups" and will spread out. If you want to limit the area of growth, trim the pups in places where you do not want banana plants.

Beautyberry (Callicarpa americana)



Photo by J Blazek

Type of plant:	Perennial deciduous woody shrub
Origin:	Native to southeastern North America
AKA:	American beautyberry, French mulberry, sourbush, bunchberry
Purpose:	Flowers, fruit, and foliage are important food sources for wildlife. Crushed berries can be used as a mosquito repellent.
Growth size:	Up to 8 tall and 6 feet wide
Light:	Full sun to partial shade, good understory shrub
Temperature:	Cold and heat tolerant, dormant in the winter
Soil:	Grows in most types of soil
Fertilizer:	Not necessary
Water:	Will tolerate draughts, but thrives with regular watering
Growth hints:	Can be pruned back extensively late winter
Unique properties:	One of the first plants to appear after land has been cleared or burned
Pests & problems:	Leaf spot, black mold
Propagation:	Seeds, root cuttings, softwood tip cuttings (taken in summer and fall), or transplant volunteer plants

Black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	Perennial
Origin:	Eastern and central North America
AKA:	Coneflower, North American sunflower
Purpose:	Nectar source for bees, butterflies, and other insects. Works well in borders or containers
Growth size:	Plant grows 2 to 3 feet in height, flower diameter is 2 to 3 inches
Light:	Prefers full sun, will grow in partial sun
Temperature:	Plant seed when soil temperature reaches 70 F. Dies back with frost
Soil:	Can tolerate poor conditions
Fertilizer:	Should be lightly fertilized
Water:	Do not allow to dry out, but avoid "wet feet"
Growth hints:	Flowers June to September
Unique properties:	Deadhead plants to get second flowering in late fall
Pests & problems:	Soil fungus, slugs, aphids, rust, and powdery mildew Will force out other flowers or plants
Propagation:	Re-seeds itself

Basil, African Blue

(Ocimum kilimandscharicum x basilicum 'Dark Opal')



Google image

Type of plant:	Perennial herb, a hybrid of camphor basil and dark opal basil
Origin:	Athens, Ohio
Purpose:	Attracts pollinators, especially bees. Does well in large containers and in gardens Edible. Strong camphor scent and flavor may not be appealing as a kitchen herb
Growth size:	Grows to 3 feet high and 4 ft wide
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Thrives in hot & humid weather
Soil:	Well drained soil
Fertilizer:	Amend soil with compost
Water:	Handles draught well
Growth hints:	Trim to encourage bushiness. Grows and blooms until frost. May return in spring if protected.
Unique properties:	Sterile, will not make seeds
Pests & problems:	Aphids, snails, and slugs
Propagation:	Must propagate from cuttings. Start cuttings in water any time during the spring and summer.

Basil, Purple (Ocimum basilicum)



Google image

Type of plant:	A warm season annual herb
Origin:	Africa and Southeast Asia
AKA:	Cultivars: Purple Ruffles, Dark Opal Purple
Purpose:	A culinary herb, decorative and fragrant garden focal point
Growth size:	Grows 18 to 24 inches
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Dies back below 40 F
Soil:	Moist, well-drained
Fertilizer:	Balanced, time-released
Water:	Use mulch to hold moisture, water when top inch is dry
Growth hints:	Pinch back to promote bushiness.
Propagation:	Seeds or slips, sometimes re-seeds itself

Basil, Thai (Ocimum basilicum variety)



Google image

Type of plant:	A woody herb in the mint family
Origin:	Southeast Asia
AKA:	Queen Siam Basil
Purpose:	Culinary herb and fragrant garden ornamental. Can be grown in containers.
Growth size:	Grows 12 to 18 inches high and 12 inches wide.
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Warm weather plant. Do not place in ground until soil is above 65 F
Soil:	Loamy soil with good compost supplement
Fertilizer:	Fish emulsion 2 to 3 times during growth season
Water:	Moist and well-drained
Growth hints:	Like conditions as rosemary plants. Can be grown together.
Unique properties:	Similar taste as sweet basil with licorice flavor
Pests & problems:	Can become very "leggy." Needs trimming to encourage bush-like shape.
Propagation:	Seeds have a lower germination rate. Plant 4 or 5 per pot. Thin to 1 or 2 plants once true leaves set.

Bottlebrush Bush (Callistemon spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A fast-growing shrub or small tree
Origin:	Australia
AKA:	Little John
Purpose:	Attracts pollinators. Ornamental.
Growth size:	Up to 15 feet tall
Light:	Full sunlight
Temperature:	Handles high temperatures and low humidity well. Frost will kill the roots.
Soil:	Loamy, moist, well-drained
Fertilizer:	Light to moderate amount of low phosphorus product
Water:	Drought resistant. Needs moderate moisture but no standing water.
Growth hints:	Prune to keep the bush shape.
Pests & problems:	All moisture related problems can affect this plant, especially root rot.
Propagation:	Use green wood cuttings.

Bougainvillea (Bougainvillea spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A fast-growing tropical vine with showy flowers
Origin:	Native to South America
Purpose:	Ornamental used in-ground and container planting. Can also be trained to grow on a trellis.
Growth size:	Can grow to 20 feet tall and wide if not controlled.
Light:	Bright full sun
Temperature:	Grows in hot, dry areas
Soil:	Moderate well-drained soil
Fertilizer:	Light fertilizer with higher potassium content
Water:	Water lightly once established. Draught resistant
Growth hints:	Prune to keep shape and size. Add fertilizer or compost after pruning.
Unique properties:	Do not baby this plant. Too much water or shade is not good for blooms.
Pests & problems:	Sap can cause skin rash in some people.
Propagation:	Slips and cuttings

Bromeliad (Bromeliaceae spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	An attractive houseplant with multiple leaves that spiral from a central cup. Many varieties from Spanish moss to pineapples
Origin:	Native to the tropical Americas
AKA:	Air plants
Purpose:	Ornamental uses and some food production
Growth size:	Wide variety of sizes
Light:	Bright indirect light
Temperature:	Does best in warm, humid conditions. The hardier cultivar will recover from a light freeze.
Soil:	Some grow without soil (epiphyte). Soil should be light, rich, fast draining.
Fertilizer:	Fertilize lightly with $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ strength liquid fertilizer.
Water:	Water sparingly with mist or fill the cup. Rinse cup of salts and residue periodically. Do not let stand in water.
Growth hints:	Expose to ethylene (apple slice) to encourage flowering.
Unique properties:	The “mother” plant will die after blooming, but “pups” will show shortly.
Propagation:	Propagate from “pups” that grow from root clusters.

Buddleia (Buddleia davidii)



Google image

Type of plant:	Woody perennial shrub
Origin:	China and Asia
AKA:	Buddleja, Summer lilac
Purpose:	Attracts butterflies
Growth size:	30 to 36 inches tall by 30 inches wide. Space plants 2 to 3 feet apart.
Light:	Full to part sun
Temperature:	Susceptible to freeze damage in winter and to frost damage as new growth begins in early spring.
Soil:	Average well-drained soil
Fertilizer:	Thin layer of controlled release fertilizer or compost
Water:	Drought tolerant. Adapts to most moisture conditions.
Growth hints:	Plant on early spring for blooms from mid-spring to fall.
Unique properties:	There are both invasive and non-invasive varieties.
Pests & problems:	Invasive types will take over native plant habitats.
Propagation:	Seeds or cuttings

Caladium (Caladium spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tropical perennial or indoor plant
Origin:	South and Central America
AKA:	Angel wings, Elephant Ears
Purpose:	Ornamental boarder plant or focal cluster
Growth size:	12 to 30 inches high X 12 to 24 inches wide
Light:	Partial shade or indirect light. The narrower the leaves, the more sun it will tolerate.
Temperature:	Heat tolerant. Cannot handle freezing weather. Mulch heavy in winter to keep in ground caladium from dying.
Soil:	Rich, well drained and high in organic material
Fertilizer:	Every 2 weeks with liquid or slow-release fertilizer
Water:	Keep soil evenly moist and do not allow to dry out.
Growth hints:	Growth season is spring and summer. Dormant in fall and winter
Unique properties:	Various shades of green mottled and blotched with white, pink, or red
Pests & problems:	All parts are toxic if chewed or swallowed. Sap can cause skin rash.
Propagation:	Mature tubers with one growth section

Camellia (Camellia spp)



Photo by J Blazek

Type of plant:	Hardwood shrub to small tree
Origin:	Southeast Asia
Purpose:	Ornamental border, background or focus point
Growth size:	Size varies with the cultivar from shrubs 2 feet tall to trees 20 feet tall.
Light:	Likes slight shade with morning sun and dappled shade in afternoon
Temperature:	Warm climates. Protect from hard freezes
Soil:	Slightly acidic well-drained soil with organic material
Fertilizer:	Fertilize with specific formula monthly as buds develop. Stop while blooms are open.
Water:	Provide adequate water when young. Mature plants need less.
Growth hints:	Check cultivar for pruning. Usually done right after blooming season.
Unique properties:	Use mulch freely to retain moisture and protect from cold.
Pests & problems:	Mites, powdery mildew, and petal blight.
Propagation:	Takes 5 years or more for a rooted cutting or seeds to grow large enough to flower. Flowering can occur as soon as 1 to 3 years when grafted to sasanqua root stock.

Cast Iron Plant (Aspidistra elatior)



Google image

Type of plant:	Herbaceous perennial and indestructible house plant
Origin:	Taiwan and Japan
AKA:	Iron plant, Ballroom plant
Purpose:	Low maintenance outdoor or house planting
Growth size:	18 to 24 inches high. Spreads slowly
Light:	Partial to heavy shade
Temperature:	Does well in 40F+ temperatures, but suffers in frost.
Soil:	Will grow in sandy to clay soils
Fertilizer:	Annual dose of all-purpose fertilizer
Water:	Needs good drainage and light watering
Growth hints:	Grows slow. Can be easily divided.
Unique properties:	Does well indoor or out, in ground or in containers.
Pests & problems:	Dust leaves on indoor plants.
Propagation:	New shoots or root cuttings

Cereus (Epiphyllum oxypetalum)



Google image

Type of plant:	Cactus
Origin:	Central or South America
AKA:	Night Blooming Cereus, Princess of the Night, Queen of the Night
Purpose:	Unique short-lived flower. Produces a small fruit.
Growth size:	Up to 5 feet high and 10 feet wide with long stalks
Light:	Partial shade
Temperature:	Tropical: freeze or frost will kill the plant
Soil:	Will flourish in poor to moderate soil.
Fertilizer:	Light feeding of established plants
Water:	Well-drained. Watch for root rot
Growth hints:	Produces lots of new growth in spring and summer. Requires manicure to keep from getting too gangly.
Unique properties:	Flowers bloom at night and open in 10 minutes
Pests & problems:	Scale, mealy bugs
Propagation:	Leaves can be rooted at any time.

Christmas Cactus (Schlumbergera spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A seasonal succulent which does not need an arid environment.
Origin:	Rain forests of Brazil
AKA:	Thanksgiving cactus, Easter cactus: differentiated by when it blooms and shape of leaves
Purpose:	Ornamental house plant
Growth size:	6 to 12 inches tall, 1 to 2 feet in width
Light:	Bright indirect light
Temperature:	Cool temps (65F) to grow and set bulbs; warmer temps to show off flower
Soil:	Well-drained loamy soil
Fertilizer:	Every 2 weeks with dilute liquid fertilizer
Water:	Do not overwater. Add water when topsoil is dry to the touch.
Growth hints:	Do not make sudden or drastic changes in light, temps, water.
Pests & problems:	Mealy bugs and root rot
Propagation:	Spring stem cuttings are best. Cover at least one segment of the cutting with soil.

Chrysanthemum (Chrysanthemum spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	An herbaceous perennial in the daisy family
Origin:	Asia and Northeast Europe
AKA:	Garden Mum, Mum
Purpose:	Colorful bedding plants used for late summer and fall
Growth size:	4 to 36 inches tall and 12 to 36 inches in width
Light:	Full sunlight
Soil:	Rich well-drained soil with plenty of humus
Fertilizer:	Heavy feeders: feed spring through summer
Water:	One inch per week, more during hot summer months
Growth hints:	Plant in ground in spring. Mulch in-ground plants in winter. Over winter potted plants indoors or in a greenhouse
Unique properties:	Deadhead flowers to keep plants in bloom.
Pests & problems:	Aphids and spider mites
Propagation:	Divide root bundle every 2 or 3 years in spring.

Citronella (Pelargonium citrosum)



Google image

Type of plant:	A type of geranium with a citrus-like aroma A tropical annual
Origin:	West Africa
AKA:	Mosquito plant, deodorizer plant, citronella plant
Purpose:	Produces a citronella grass (lemongrass) aroma, but not as potent
Growth size:	18 to 24 inches high and 12 to 18 inches in width
Light:	Full sun to partial shade. Afternoon partial shade is good.
Temperature:	Dies back with a freeze
Soil:	Moderate well drained soil. Good for containers
Fertilizer:	Use a balanced product every month.
Water:	Water when soil dries out. Do not over-water. Drought tolerant
Unique properties:	Purple blooms.
Propagation:	seeds and stem cuttings. Allow seeds to dry on plant before collecting.

Coleus (Solenostemon scutellarioides cvs)



Google image

Type of plant:	Tender tropical
Origin:	Areas along the Equator
Purpose:	Foliage used to decorate borders and for cuttings
Growth size:	12 to 16 inches high and 10 to 12 inches in width
Light:	May be damaged by full, hot sun which varies with cultivar and area
Temperature:	Warm-weather plants. Heat tolerant. Damaged by temps below 40F
Fertilizer:	Lightly
Water:	Needs moderate to heavy watering.
Growth hints:	Plant spring through summer
Unique properties:	Late season blooms. Serrated foliage of unique chartreuse to copper shades with complimentary dark burgundy undersides.
Pests & problems:	Sap can cause rash in some humans. Oils are toxic to dogs and cats.

Coneflower, Purple (Echinacea purpurea)



Google image

Type of plant:	A hardy perennial prairie plant
Origin:	Eastern North America
Purpose:	It is a source of nectar for pollinators and a decorative planting
Growth size:	10 to 14 inches tall
Light:	Does best in full sunlight but will tolerate some shade.
Temperature:	Dies back in winter but comes back every spring.
Soil:	Does well in most soils.
Fertilizer:	Light fertilizer in the spring
Water:	Handles droughts but should receive regular watering.
Pests & problems:	Can be an aggressive spreader.
Propagation:	Self-seeding. Root ball can be divided.

Crape Myrtle (Lagerstroemia indica)



Google Image

Type of plant:	Deciduous perennial. A small to medium shrub, or small to medium tree with multiple trunks
Origin:	Southeast Asia and China
AKA:	Crepe myrtle
Purpose:	Decorative hedges and trees. Provides for wildlife and pollinators.
Growth size:	5 to 18 feet tall and 6 to 12 feet in canopy width
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Regrows after light to moderate freeze.
Soil:	Moist, well-drained soil
Fertilizer:	Spring and summer. Use tree spikes for larger species
Water:	Give adequate water when young. Once established there is some drought tolerance.
Growth hints:	Fast growing once established. Prune with caution. Do not prune too much at one time.
Unique properties:	Bark splits and sloughs off showing a smooth inner bark. This is not a problem.
Pests & problems:	An aggressive plant that is considered invasive in some areas.
Propagation:	Cuttings, runners (suckers) or seeds

Croton (Codiaeum variegatum)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tropical perennial with large, multicolored leaves
Origin:	Tropical forests of Southeast Asia and Oceania
AKA:	Garden croton
Purpose:	Ornamental house plant
Growth size:	3 to 4 feet high and 3 feet in width
Light:	Bright light indoors. Full sun outdoors. Too little light will cause new growth to be pale in color.
Temperature:	Indoor room temperature is adequate. Outside should be above 50F.
Soil:	Rich, well-drained soil
Fertilizer:	Spring and summer
Water:	Allow for even moisture throughout the pot. Do not keep too wet. Mist leaves if humidity is low.
Growth hints:	Pot should be large enough to support upward growth.
Pests & problems:	All parts of the plant, including the seeds, are poisonous.
Propagation:	Cuttings can be rooted in water or soil.

Curry Tree (Murraya koenigii)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tropical to subtropical tree
Origin:	Asia
AKA:	Sweet neem tree (not related to the neem family)
Purpose:	Culinary: leaves used in Indian curries
Growth size:	Up to 20 feet tall in-ground. 3 to 4 feet in a container.
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Likes the heat and humidity. May survive a light freeze but will drop leaves.
Soil:	Well drained soil
Fertilizer:	Lightly use nitrogen-heavy fertilizer for more leaves.
Water:	Water infrequently
Growth hints:	Trim to encourage bushing.
Unique properties:	Active growing and planting in spring. Dormant in winter.
Propagation:	Cuttings, suckers, or fresh, ripe seeds

Dieffenbachia (Dieffenbachia sp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tropical herbaceous
Origin:	Tropical Central and South America
AKA:	Dumb cane
Purpose:	Usually grown as a house plant
Growth size:	3 to 5 feet tall and 1 to 2 feet in width
Light:	Partial to full shade
Temperature:	Likes high temps and humidity. Will drop leaves with temperatures below 50F.
Soil:	Well-drained potting soil with a lot of peat moss
Fertilizer:	every 3 to 4 weeks with dilute liquid fertilizer
Water:	Keep moist but not wet during growing season. Cut back on the water when dormant.
Unique properties:	A wide variety of cultivars
Pests & problems:	Toxicity: will cause numbness and irritation of skin, lips, throat, and eyes. Bothered by scale and mites. Wipe leaves with moist soft cloth.
Propagation:	Root cuttings, stem cuttings, or laying a cane in potting soil

Dragon Fruit (Hylocereus undatus)



Type of plant:	Cactus Plant
Origin:	Tropical America
Purpose:	Produces an edible fruit.
Growth size:	Long stalks and branches reaching dozens of feet
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Warm
Soil:	Well-drained. In ground: 1 part each soil, sand, and compost In containers use cactus soil mix.
Fertilizer:	Feed with compost or fertilizer.
Water:	Water moderately once a week.
Growth hints:	Needs sturdy support such as stakes.
Propagation:	Leaves will readily self-root.

Elderberry (Sambucus spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A large deciduous shrub or bush
Origin:	North America and Europe
Purpose:	Food for wildlife. Culinary: fruit for jellies and wine, tea from flowers
Growth size:	Up to 20 feet high
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	From temperate climates to hot and humid areas
Soil:	Well-drained soils with high humus content
Fertilizer:	8-8-8 lightly twice during the growing season
Water:	Needs ample moisture, but not "wet feet."
Pests & problems:	Raw berries and all parts have low toxicity. Flowers must be boiled for tea.

Esperanza (Tecoma stans)



Photo from yourconroenews.com

Type of plant:	A woody perennial herbaceous shrub
Origin:	Texas Hill Country
AKA:	Yellow bells, hardy yellow trumpet, yellow alder
Purpose:	Medicinal plant. The root can be used as a base for beer. Attracts pollinators
Growth size:	3 to 6 feet high and 3 to 4 feet in width
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	High heat tolerance
Soil:	Fertile well-drained soil. Add compost if needed.
Fertilizer:	Once a month with a balanced product
Water:	At least once per week, otherwise will wilt.
Growth hints:	Trim back during winter dormancy
Unique properties:	Trim seed pods to encourage flowers.
Pests & problems:	The pollen is toxic as is honey made from this plant. Beekeepers should avoid this plant.
Propagation:	Seeds or cuttings

False Anise (Illicium parviflorum)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	A shade loving shrub
Origin:	Georgia and Florida
AKA:	Florida sunshine, Florida anise, Hardy anise, Ocala anise, small anise tree, Yellow anise tree
Purpose:	Fragrant evergreen with insignificant flower in spring. Non-edible
Growth size:	6 feet high and 3 feet wide
Light:	Partial to full shade
Temperature:	A hardy perennial that usually tolerates temperatures down to 0F
Soil:	Clay/loamy soil with high organic material and good drainage
Fertilizer:	Annually in spring
Water:	Moderate water requirements. Will show wilting.
Growth hints:	Trim in the spring to desired shape and height.
Unique properties:	Produces bright yellow foliage in fall
Pests & problems:	Few pests or problems. Poisonous if ingested. Not a substitute for star anise spice in cooking.
Propagation:	Cuttings

False Indigo (Baptisia australis)



Google image

Type of plant:	A perennial wildflower
Origin:	North America
AKA:	Blue wild indigo
Purpose:	Good color for bedding plant. Inferior to true indigo, but used as a substitute for dying cloth
Growth size:	3 to 4 feet tall and 2 to 3 feet wide
Light:	Full sun. Gets floppy if not enough sun
Temperature:	Cool weather plant. Dies back with freeze but returns in spring
Soil:	Dry, well-drained.
Fertilizer:	Thrives in poorer soil.
Water:	Minimal water. Drought tolerant
Growth hints:	Slow growing. Takes 2 to 3 years to flower. A member of the pea family. If flowers are not deadheaded, pods and seeds will result.
Unique properties:	Long tap roots make them difficult to divide.
Pests & problems:	Needs good air circulation. Powdery mildew and leaf fungus occurs if too crowded.
Propagation:	Self-seeding. Stem cuttings also work.

False Sea Onion (Albuca bracteata)



Type of plant:	A bulbous plant which looks like an onion
Origin:	Coastal South Africa
AKA:	German Onion, Pregnant Onion, Sea Onion
Purpose:	Ornamental house plant
Growth size:	18 to 36 inches tall and 10 to 20 inches wide
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Prefers warm to hot temperatures. Frost will kill the plant.
Soil:	Sandy, well-drained
Fertilizer:	Annually
Water:	When the soil dries out but must drain off quickly.
Growth hints:	Drought tolerant
Unique properties:	Grows on top of the soil. Goes into a dormant stage with drought.
Propagation:	"Pups" grow under the bulb's skin then drop from the mother plant.

Ficus (Ficus benjamina)



Google image

Type of plant:	A broadleaf evergreen tropical tree
Origin:	India to North Australia
AKA:	Weeping Fig, benjamina fig, ficus tree
Purpose:	House plant in a container. In-ground provides for wildlife
Growth size:	50 feet in the ground. Trim to desired height.
Light:	Bright indirect light. Direct light can burn the leaves.
Temperature:	Prefers temperatures above 75F. Below 60F will stunt plant. Avoid drafts and cold spots.
Soil:	Moderate well drained soil
Fertilizer:	Monthly in spring and summer. Every other month in fall and winter
Water:	Once soil is dry, water thoroughly. Does not like "wet feet". Mist leaves if air is dry.
Growth hints:	Keep pot bound. Does not like to be handled.
Unique properties:	Filters pollutants from air.
Pests & problems:	Mealy bugs & spider mites. Treat with neem oil.
Propagation:	Cuttings from greenwood branches

Fiddle-leaf (Ficus lyrata)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tall growing tropical tree
Origin:	Tropical Africa
AKA:	Fiddle-leaf fig
Purpose:	Ornamental large-leafed tree
Growth size:	In the wild this can get to 20 feet tall. Can be managed to a lower height in containers.
Light:	Indirect bright light
Temperature:	Warm humid temperatures are necessary. Avoid big temperature swings such as AC drafts.
Soil:	Moderate fast draining soil preferred.
Fertilizer:	Lightly throughout the growing season.
Water:	Keep soil moist but do not allow "wet feet". Root rot will cause leaves to drop.
Growth hints:	Slow to start but grows rapidly once established.
Unique properties:	Damage to leaves will result in dead spots.
Pests & problems:	Mildly toxic sap. Handle with care.
Propagation:	Difficult with stem cuttings. Leaf cuttings grow slowly.

Firespike, Red (Odontonema strictum)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	A clumping herbaceous tropical perennial
Origin:	Mexico and Central America
Purpose:	Attracts pollinators: butterflies, hummingbirds, bees
Growth size:	4 to 6 feet tall
Light:	Partial shade to full sun; more sun = longer blooms
Temperature:	Hot climate. Will die back with a frost. Light freeze will not kill the roots
Soil:	Moderate well-drained
Fertilizer:	Fertilizing does not seem to affect the plant much.
Water:	Do not allow to dry out. The plant will wilt.
Unique properties:	Great flowers from late summer through first frost

Four O'clock (Mirabilis jalapa)



Google image

Type of plant:	A flowering perennial bush
Origin:	South America (Peru)
Purpose:	Adds color to the garden from mid-summer until frost
Growth size:	2 to 3 tall feet and wide
Light:	Full sun and partial shade
Temperature:	Handles heat well
Soil:	Moderate, well-drained
Fertilizer:	Light
Water:	Needs ample watering with heat
Growth hints:	Low maintenance
Unique properties:	Attracts butterflies and hummingbirds. Mildly toxic to humans and pets if ingested. Sap can cause rash.
Pests & problems:	There may be a problem controlling these plants.
Propagation:	Self-seeding

Foxtail Fern (Asparagus densiflorus 'Meyers')



Google image

Type of plant:	Annual
Origin:	South Africa
Purpose:	Ornamental house plant adaptable to warmer outside gardens
Growth size:	Up to 2 feet high and 6 feet wide
Light:	Indirect light indoors. Partial shade outdoors
Temperature:	Prefers warm to hot areas. Protect below 40 F
Soil:	Loose, well-drained soil
Fertilizer:	Dilute liquid
Water:	Keep plant hydrated and humid. Do not allow to dry out.
Growth hints:	Considered aggressive and an invasive species
Unique properties:	Although this looks like a fern, it is a type of lily
Pests & problems:	Poisonous to pets and people
Propagation:	Propagate by splitting root clusters; look for “pups” breaking off main bulb

Geranium (Perlagonium spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	Annual tropical plant; hundreds of species
Origin:	South Africa
AKA:	Not a true "Geranium" but carries the common name.
Purpose:	Grown for flowers and scented leaves in containers and beds.
Growth size:	Usually grow to 18" to 36" high X 20" wide
Light:	In general, these need 6+ hours of direct sunlight but will do well in partial shade.
Temperature:	Warm weather plants but suffers with extreme heat.
Soil:	Moderate well-drained
Fertilizer:	Fertilize with half-strength liquid fertilizer during growing season; do not feed during winter.
Water:	Let dry between watering; too much water will cause root rot.
Growth hints:	Deadhead to promote more flowers; pinch back to force bushing.
Pests & problems:	Do not keep too many leaves in shadier conditions.
Propagation:	Stem cuttings

Hamelia (Hamelia patens)



Google image

Type of plant:	A large woody perennial shrub
Origin:	Southeast United States
AKA:	Firebush, hummingbird bush
Purpose:	Copper-red blooms attracts pollinators.
Growth size:	Can grow to 15', but smaller in containers.
Light:	Full sunlight to partial shade
Temperature:	Warm to hot temperatures
Soil:	Rich well-drained
Fertilizer:	Light in spring and summer
Water:	Once established it is drought tolerant. Does not like "wet feet". Will develop root rot.
Growth hints:	Prune to maintain height, but too much pruning will lessen flowers.
Unique properties:	Long lasting flowers
Propagation:	Seeds or cuttings

Hibiscus, Cranberry (Hibiscus acetocella)



Google image

Type of plant:	A hardy annual or tender perennial shrub
Origin:	Hybridized from plants in Africa, established in South America and Southeast Asia.
AKA:	Red-leaf hibiscus, False Roselle, African Rose Mallow. One of the many hibiscus plants known as rose mallow.
Purpose:	Strong, sour taste. Used in salads, vegetables, and tea; attracts pollinators.
Growth size:	4' to 6' tall X 3' wide
Light:	Partial shade to full sun
Temperature:	Will handle hot temps, but frost will kill the plant.
Soil:	Moderate well-drained
Fertilizer:	Monthly with 8-8-8 during the season
Water:	Needs regular watering but should not have "wet feet."
Unique properties:	Flowers match the foliage and arrive late in the season. Flowers lasts only one day.
Propagation:	Propagate with seeds (rapid germination and growth) and from cuttings.

Hibiscus, Luna (Hibiscus moscheutos)



Google image

Type of plant:	A perennial deciduous marsh shrub
Origin:	Eastern United States
AKA:	Swamp rose mallow, crimson-eyed rose mallow, eastern rose mallow. One of the many hibiscus plants known as rose mallow.
Purpose:	A good landscape or container plant
Growth size:	Reaches 24" to 36" high and 24" wide.
Light:	Best grown in full sun
Temperature:	Once established this is a hardy plant that will withstand heat and frost, returning after all but the worst freeze.
Soil:	Does best in moderate soil.
Fertilizer:	Use light fertilization.
Water:	Keep plants evenly watered, not allowing to wilt.
Growth hints:	Space 2-3' apart
Unique properties:	Plant mid to late spring
Propagation:	Seeds or cuttings

Hibiscus, Native (Hibiscus lasiocarpas)



Google image

Type of plant:	A wetland or marsh woody perennial herb
Origin:	Southeast United States
AKA:	Hairy-fruited hibiscus. One of the many hibiscus plants known as rose mallow.
Purpose:	Flowers and seeds attract pollinators, especially songbirds, butterflies, and hummingbirds/
Growth size:	Grows on single stalk up to 4' - 7' tall.
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Dies back after freeze but will return in the spring.
Fertilizer:	Light
Water:	Enjoys wet areas in marsh or along stream banks.
Unique properties:	Low maintenance
Propagation:	Self-seeding

Hibiscus, October Rose (Hibiscus radiatus)



Google image

Type of plant:	An aggressive woody herb
Origin:	Native to Southern and southeast Asia but naturalized in all tropical climes.
AKA:	Monarch rose mallow. One of the many hibiscus plants known as rose mallow.
Purpose:	Attracts pollinators and songbirds.
Growth size:	6' to 8' high and spreads rapidly.
Light:	Full sun to light shade
Temperature:	Enjoys the heat. Listed as evergreen but has been known to shed its leaves during winter.
Soil:	Well-drained
Fertilizer:	Little or none
Water:	Water regularly but do not keep wet.
Growth hints:	Plant mid to late spring
Unique properties:	tickers are prevalent on stems and leaves, especially when plant dries out.
Pests & problems:	Considered invasive in some areas.
Propagation:	Seeds and cuttings

Hibiscus, Texas Star (Hibiscus coccineus)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	A hardy perennial shrub
Origin:	Southeast North America
AKA:	Swamp hibiscus, scarlet rose mallow, wild rose mallow. One of the many hibiscus plants known as rose mallow.
Purpose:	Wetland plant that attracts and supports pollinators.
Growth size:	6' to 8' tall and 12" to 18" wide
Light:	Full sun. Will grow in shade but will not produce flowers.
Temperature:	Likes hot weather if there is ample water. Dies back in a freeze but returns in the spring.
Soil:	Likes dense, wet soil but will also do well in lighter soil.
Fertilizer:	Not necessary
Water:	Likes water. Will tolerate a drought but will not flourish.
Propagation:	Self-seeding and cuttings

Hyacinth Bean (Lablab purpureus)



Google image

Type of plant:	Annual vine
Origin:	Africa
Purpose:	Grown as a ground cover, for decoration, and may be eaten when properly prepared (some toxicity)
Growth size:	12 to 15 ft vine that needs support
Light:	Full sun or partial shade
Temperature:	Grows well in heat.
Soil:	Will do well in poor soil.
Fertilizer:	Light
Water:	Water moderately
Unique properties:	Dark green foliage, with white or blue-purple flowers
Pests & problems:	Mature beans are poisonous before cooking.

Hydrangea, Oakleaf (Hydrangea quercifolia)



Google image

Type of plant:	A deciduous shrub
Origin:	Southeast United States
Purpose:	Ornamental plants and hedges
Growth size:	8'
Light:	Full sunlight and partial shade
Temperature:	Good for hot climates. Will recover from light freeze.
Soil:	Rich, well-drained
Fertilizer:	In spring and summer
Water:	Even soil moisture but not standing water.
Growth hints:	Needs full sun to produce blooms. Prune after flowering to maintain desired shape and height.
Pests & problems:	Leaf spot and powdery mildew
Propagation:	Stem cuttings

Ivy, Common (Hedera helix)



Google image

Type of plant:	A perennial evergreen vine
Origin:	Northern Europe and Western Asia
AKA:	English ivy, European ivy
Purpose:	A dense ground cover or ornamental climbing cover
Growth size:	6" to 12" high on 12' long vine
Light:	Bright indirect sunlight. Will tolerate little direct sun.
Temperature:	Moderate temperature range. Protect from extreme heat and cold.
Soil:	Fertile, well-drained. In hotter climates adequate mulch should be used.
Fertilizer:	Sparingly: once in the spring should be enough.
Water:	Keep evenly moist. Do not allow to dry out but do not soak.
Growth hints:	Pinch back new growth to promote bushing.
Pests & problems:	Aphids and spider mites: use insecticidal soaps.
Propagation:	Cuttings. Will root where it contacts the ground.

Ivy, Swedish (Plectranthus verticillatus)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tender perennial
Origin:	South Africa
AKA:	Swedish begonia
Purpose:	Ornamental, house plant and air purifying
Growth size:	Trails 1' to 2' and grows to its container.
Light:	Bright, indirect light indoors. Keep in the shade outside as direct sunlight will burn the plant.
Temperature:	Does best over 40F. Prefers 70F to 75F. Protect from a freeze.
Soil:	Adapts to a wide range of well-drained soil.
Fertilizer:	2 to 3 times per year with slow-release food
Water:	Water when the soil dries out. Do not let stand in water.
Growth hints:	Trim often to promote bushing.
Unique properties:	Not related to the ivy family
Pests & problems:	White flies. Use insecticidal soap.
Propagation:	Stem cuttings

Jacobina (Justicia carnea)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	An evergreen shrub
Origin:	Tropical forests of Brazil
AKA:	Brazilian plume, Flamingo flower
Purpose:	Ornamental. Used as a medicinal herb in native Brazilian culture.
Growth size:	Different cultivars vary from 2 to 6 feet tall and 1 to 4 feet wide
Light:	Shade
Temperature:	Does not tolerate freezing temperatures. Some hardier cultivars will come back in the spring.
Soil:	Rich with compost or organic matter. Well-drained
Fertilizer:	Away from the stem with new growth in spring. Then once per month with slow release
Water:	Water the soil around the plant when the top inch is dry.
Growth hints:	Deadhead flowers to promote more blooms. Pinch back to force bushing.
Unique properties:	50+ varieties available
Propagation:	Cuttings

Joseph's Coat (Alternanthera spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	Depends on cultivar: annual or perennial
Origin:	Tropical Americas, Asia, and Africa
AKA:	Joyweed
Purpose:	Warm season bedding plant used for foliage
Growth size:	12 inches tall and 14-16 inches wide
Light:	Full to part sun
Temperature:	Prefers heat. Will die-back with temperatures below 40F.
Soil:	Wide variety
Fertilizer:	Light through the summer
Water:	Moderate requirements
Growth hints:	Grows well once established.
Pests & problems:	Some species are considered weeds and invasive.
Propagation:	Cuttings

Kalanchoe (Kalanchoe spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A succulent plant with bright flowers
Origin:	Southern Africa and Madagascar
AKA:	Names vary by cultivar.
Purpose:	Ornamental plant which attracts pollinators
Growth size:	6" and 4' depending on cultivar
Light:	Full sun to bright, indirect light
Temperature:	Hot and dry conditions are preferred.
Soil:	A wide range of potting soils are acceptable.
Fertilizer:	Slow-release product during the summer
Water:	Moderate water during summer. Less during winter. Watch fleshy leaves for signs of stress.
Growth hints:	Can get very leggy. Trim stem to maintain desired shape and to force bushing.
Unique properties:	Can be aggressive and considered invasive.
Pests & problems:	Mealy bugs, powdery mildew, and aphids. Root rot can be common.
Propagation:	Leaf or stem cuttings. Many species will put "pups" along the edge of leaves and will drop them to the ground.

Lantana (Lantana camara)



Google image

Type of plant:	Broadleaf evergreen shrub
Origin:	Tropical regions of Africa and the Americas
AKA:	150+ species. Names vary.
Purpose:	A fragrant bedding plant that attracts pollinators
Growth size:	6' high X 8' wide
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Warm-season plant that is affected by frost and killed by a freeze.
Soil:	Prefers well drained soils
Fertilizer:	Little required.
Water:	Moderate watering
Growth hints:	Considered invasive in many areas.
Pests & problems:	All parts are highly toxic to humans, especially children, grazing livestock, dogs, and cats. Not toxic to birds. Smoke is toxic. Do not burn.
Propagation:	Cuttings. Spreads rapidly by runners.

Ligularia (Ligularia spp)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	Herbaceous large-leafed perennial
Origin:	China and Japan
AKA:	120-140 species. Common names vary.
Purpose:	Ornamental
Growth size:	18" to 24" height X 24" to 36" width
Light:	Shade. Keep out of sun and wind.
Temperature:	A cool weather plant that wilts in extreme heat. Dies back in a freeze.
Soil:	Rich
Fertilizer:	A layer of mulch or compost annually
Water:	Keep ground damp to wet. The hotter the temperature, the more water needed.
Growth hints:	Cover crown with 3" of mulch.
Unique properties:	Bright yellow flowers appear in clusters or corymbs. Adds color in the autumn.
Pests & problems:	Snails are attracted to the large leaves.
Propagation:	Root cuttings after 3 or 4 years

Lily, Peace (Spathiphyllum spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A flowering tropical house plant. Not a true lily
Origin:	Central and South America
AKA:	Spath lily
Purpose:	Grown indoor or outdoor, in ground or in container
Growth size:	Different cultivars grow from 6 inches up to 3 ft.
Light:	Bright <u>indirect</u> light
Temperature:	Does poorly in temperatures below 40F.
Soil:	Moderate
Fertilizer:	Light. 2 or 3 times a year
Water:	Keep soil moist but do not over water. Mist leaves.
Unique properties:	A decorative plant which helps clean the air
Pests & problems:	Pollen is mildly toxic to small humans and pets.
Propagation:	Divide when it out grows its container.

Lily, Pineapple (Eucomis spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	Perennial herbaceous bulb
Origin:	South Africa
Purpose:	Ornamental. Attracts pollinators.
Growth size:	Up to 3' tall X 2' wide
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	65F+ to begin growing. Does not like cool temperatures.
Soil:	Loamy, coarse well-drained
Fertilizer:	Every few weeks with high potassium mix.
Water:	Water after top 1" of soil dries out.
Growth hints:	Dig bulbs when dormant and dry out before planting.
Unique properties:	A unique ornamental plant with distinctive flower
Propagation:	Watch bulbs in spring for "pups" forming; break off and plant away from parent.

Liriope (Liriope spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	Grass-like herbaceous flowering perennial
Origin:	East and Southeast Asia
AKA:	Monkey Grass, Lily grass, Turf lily
Purpose:	Border foreground, edging, ground cover
Growth size:	9" to 24" tall X 12" to 18" wide
Light:	Full sunlight to partial shade
Temperature:	Warm summer temperatures. Dies back during freeze. Comes back in the spring.
Soil:	Moderate, well-drained
Fertilizer:	Spring and monthly during summer
Water:	Drought resistant. Water weekly when soil dries out.
Growth hints:	Trim back when dormant to avoid thatch.
Unique properties:	Some species produces flower spikes.
Pests & problems:	Fungal disease caused by too much overhead watering. Root rot. Snails and slugs
Propagation:	Root division

Milkweed (Asclepias spp)*



Photo by J Blazek

* There are over 140 species of milkweed. The origin of a specific variety of milkweed is important. When purchasing milkweed be sure it is native to Southeast Louisiana. Many varieties sold commercially are not native to this area. Non-native milkweed may harm native pollinators and can become invasive replacing native plants that are important food and habitat sources for native insect and animal species. Certain non-native milkweeds (Mexican milkweed, *Asclepias curassavica*, is one) bloom at the wrong time and can disrupt Monarch butterfly migration by encouraging them to stay too long and delay instinctual Fall flights back to Mexico. LSU AgCenter and Crosby Arboretum websites are excellent resources on native plants for butterflies and other pollinators.

Type of plant:	A perennial woody herb. 140 species.
Origin/AKA:	Swamp milkweed (<i>Asclepias incarnata</i>) and Aquatic milkweed (<i>Asclepias perinnis</i>) are native to southeast Louisiana. See* above.
Purpose:	Attracts pollinators. Certain species are the only food source of Monarch caterpillars.
Growth size:	Reaches 2' to 4' tall
Light:	Prefers full sun but will survive in partial shade.
Temperature:	Once established it will handle heat and all but the worst freezes.
Soil:	Poor to moderate
Fertilizer:	Light to none.
Water:	Depends on variety.
Pests & problems:	Sometimes considered a weed. Non-native species can become invasive. Sap contains latex and can cause rash in some humans.
Propagation:	Re-seeds

Mint (Mentha spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A hardy perennial culinary herb
Origin:	Worldwide
AKA:	Depends on cultivar.
Purpose:	Culinary and medical herb
Growth size:	12" to 18" tall X 18" to 24" wide
Light:	Partial shade
Temperature:	Depends on variety: Peppermint best for cool temperatures. Spearmint best for warm temperatures.
Soil:	Rich moist soil
Fertilizer:	Every 4 to 6 weeks during growing season. If in a container and frequently watered, use liquid fertilizer more often.
Water:	Do not let it dry out, but do not allow standing water.
Growth hints:	Grow in containers to prevent spreading.
Unique properties:	Many cultivars available
Pests & problems:	Use liquid fungicide for rust on leaves. Will attract white flies and mites. Toxic to pets and horses
Propagation:	Easily propagated with root or stem.

Opuntia (Opuntia spp)



Google image

Type of plant:	A family of cacti which includes the prickly pear or Indian fig
Origin:	Southern United States and Central American
Purpose:	Hardy decorative plant suited for dry, hot areas.
Growth size:	10" to 20" high with flat leaves and stems
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Hot climates
Soil:	Well-drained, sandy
Fertilizer:	Outdoor plants need none. Indoor need very little.
Water:	Minimal. Once every 2 to 3 weeks at start. Established plants need only rainwater.
Pests & problems:	Beware of glochids (hair-like spines).

Oregano (Origanum vulgare)



Google image

Type of plant:	A perennial herb shrub of the mint family
Origin:	Western and southern Mediterranean area
Purpose:	Distinctive culinary herb
Growth size:	2' tall with 18" spread
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Prefers warm, humid climates. May need protection from freeze.
Soil:	Dry to medium, well-drained
Fertilizer:	None. Adding compost or fertilizer MAY change the flavor.
Water:	Too much water lessens flavor.
Growth hints:	Trim to avoid leggy-ness.
Unique properties:	Good companion plant for vegetables
Pests & problems:	Root rot, aphids & spider mites. Use insecticidal soap.
Propagation:	Start from seeds (slower) or cuttings.

Palmetto, Saw (Serenoa repens)



Google image

Type of plant:	A perennial low-growing palm found as pine tree undergrowth.
Origin:	Southeast United States, especially the Gulf coast
Purpose:	A source of food for wildlife. Used by man for food, medicine, clothing, and housing. A source of nectar for honeybees.
Growth size:	5' to 10'
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Likes warm temps. Will recover from a light freeze.
Soil:	Mostly sandy soils or native clays
Fertilizer:	Biannually with palm fertilizer (10-5-10)
Water:	Prefers a moderate amount of water but can tolerate a drought.
Growth hints:	Slow-growing and long-lived
Unique properties:	Easy to grow in the south. If grown indoors be sure to provide plenty of light. Deer resistant and salt tolerant
Propagation:	Best by rhizome cuttings, although slow and uncertain.

Parsley (Petroselinum Crispum)



Google image

Type of plant:	A biannual herb
Origin:	Eastern and central Mediterranean area
Purpose:	Culinary and decorative. Attracts the swallowtail butterfly. Plant with vegetables or herbs, or as a border plant.
Growth size:	12" to 18" tall X 8" to 12" wide
Light:	Adaptable to full sun and partial shade
Temperature:	Cooler weather. Does not like the heat.
Soil:	Moist rich
Fertilizer:	Little to none
Water:	Light to moderate
Growth hints:	Pinch emerging flower heads to keep a sweet taste.
Pests & problems:	White flies. Use insecticidal soap. Black swallowtail caterpillars. Plant enough for all.
Propagation:	Seeds are slow starting.

Passionflower (Passiflora incarnata)



Photo by J Blazek

Type of plant:	Hundreds of passionflower cultivars including annuals, perennials, vines, shrubs, and trees.
Origin:	Southeastern North America to South America Louisiana native is a perennial vine, <i>Passiflora incarnata</i> .
AKA:	Purple passionflower, apricot vine, granadilla, maypop
Purpose:	Attracts pollinators, especially the Gulf fritillary (main food source for its caterpillar)
Growth size:	Vines grow as large as the support: fences and trellis. Some species can grow to 30'.
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Warmer climates
Soil:	Medium, rich, well-drained
Fertilizer:	Biweekly. These are heavy feeders.
Water:	1" to 1-1/2" per week if no rain
Growth hints:	Grow in container to control spread.
Unique properties:	Complex flowers are a trademark.
Pests & problems:	Aggressive. Considered invasive in some areas.
Propagation:	Seeds. Root and stem cuttings

Patchouli (Pogostemon cablin)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	A perennial woody herb shrub in the mint family
Origin:	Malay Archipelago and West Indies
Purpose:	Medicinal and cosmetic herb
Growth size:	12" to 18" tall and about 12" wide
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Likes heat. Will die back with temps below 40F.
Soil:	Moderate well-drained
Fertilizer:	Monthly with 8-8-8
Water:	Wilts quickly when it needs water. Twice weekly
Growth hints:	Grow in containers if it needs to be brought inside for winter.
Unique properties:	Produces small fall flowers.
Propagation:	Slip cuttings

Pentas (Pentas lanceolata, Pentas carnea)



Google image

Type of plant:	A semitropical shrub
Origin:	Africa
Purpose:	Decorative landscaping plant. Attracts pollinators.
Growth size:	10" to 24". Some may grow larger.
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Will thrive in warm temps. Can survive a <u>light</u> freeze.
Soil:	Well-drained soil
Fertilizer:	A balanced mix such as 8-8-8
Water:	Water regularly, about twice per week
Growth hints:	Pinch back to get a fuller shrub.
Propagation:	Slips

Pineapple Plant (Ananas comosus)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	An herbaceous perennial in the bromeliad family.
Origin:	South America
Purpose:	Culinary and ornamental
Growth size:	2' to 4' high X 3' wide
Light:	Full sunlight
Temperature:	Warm to hot weather. Freezes can kill the plant.
Soil:	Rich, well-drained
Fertilizer:	Dilute liquid product during growing season
Water:	Ample but not standing water
Growth hints:	Once rooted, it may take 24 months or longer to produce fruit which may take several months to mature.
Unique properties:	<p>The pineapple flower grows from the center on a long stem.</p> <p>The pineapple itself is a composite of berries forming a single fruit.</p> <p>After it produces the fruit, the mother sends up "pups" and then dies back as the "pups" grow larger. It will only bloom once, If the "pups" are left attached to the mother, they will still bloom.</p>
Pests & problems:	Mealy bugs can be treated with neem oil. Root rot may occur in standing water.
Propagation:	<p>Remove new "pups" and plant in separate container.</p> <p>Twist of the top of the fruit. Remove a few leaves until you see small roots. Add soil up to the base of the leaves. Water the top until established.</p>

Poinsettia (Euphorbia pulcherrima)



Google image

Type of plant:	Perennial herbal shrub
Origin:	Mexico's tropical forests
Purpose:	Holiday decoration plant
Growth size:	2'
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	60 to 70F. Protect from frost and freeze.
Soil:	Loamy (clay & sand with compost)
Fertilizer:	Do not fertilize after flowers emerge.
Water:	When soil feels dry, water until it comes out the bottom hole. Do not allow it stand in water.
Growth hints:	It is easier to buy new plants each year. These can re-bloom with the proper care.
Unique properties:	The flowers are small and yellow. The red leaves are bracts.
Pests & problems:	Use insecticidal soaps for white flies. Sap may cause skin rash.
Propagation:	Cuttings in soil

Polka Dot Plant (Hypoestes phyllostachya)



Google image

Type of plant:	An evergreen shrub, small and slow growing. An annual in cooler climes. A perennial in tropical and subtropical
Origin:	Madagascar, but highly hybridized today
Purpose:	A decorative house plant or contrasting garden balance point.
Growth size:	Usually less than 15". Some cultivars grow to 30".
Light:	Bright filtered sun. Some direct sunlight is tolerated.
Soil:	Light fast draining soil is best.
Fertilizer:	Monthly with balanced liquid
Water:	Keep moist but do not over water. Somewhat drought tolerant but looks best with regular watering.
Growth hints:	Pinch back to encourage bushing.
Unique properties:	Likes humid conditions.
Propagation:	Cuttings

Pokeberry (Phytolaccaceae americana)



Google image

Type of plant:	An aggressive perennial herb, shrub, tree, or vine
Origin:	Southeastern North America
AKA:	Poke sallet (helmet), American pokeweed, Pigeon berry, Dragonberries
Purpose:	A food source for birds. All parts are toxic to humans and pets.
Growth size:	3' to 6' tall
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Handles heat well. Dies back after freeze.
Soil:	Moderate well-drained
Fertilizer:	None
Water:	Will handle drought but regular watering is best.
Unique properties:	Has been eaten by humans for many years but must be boiled for hours with frequent exchange of water. Death can occur if eaten when it is improperly prepared.
Pests & problems:	All parts are toxic to humans and pets. Long taproots. Highly invasive
Propagation:	Seeds

Pothos (Epipremnum aureum)



Google image

Type of plant:	Tropical forest plant that thrives in many climates and conditions.
Origin:	Southeast Asia
AKA:	Money plant, Devil's ivy (not in the ivy family)
Purpose:	Ornamental house plant
Growth size:	Long growing vine with 2" to 4" leaves
Light:	Bright indirect sun or dappled shade
Temperature:	A light freeze will cause die-back but roots will survive. Most house temps are acceptable.
Soil:	Most types of soil will meet its needs.
Fertilizer:	Minimal
Water:	Drought resistant and will thrive with "wet feet."
Growth hints:	Adapts to a wide range of growing conditions.
Unique properties:	Can be grown in water <u>or</u> soil. A perfect beginner plant. Easy to maintain.
Pests & problems:	Resembles and sometimes confused with common philodendron. Not a philodendron
Propagation:	Cuttings can start in water.

Redbird Plant (Pedilanthus tithymaloides)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tropical succulent perennial plant
Origin:	Tropical North and Central America
AKA:	Devil's backbone, Christmas candle, Jacob's ladder, Japanese poinsettia, Redbird cactus, Slipper's spurge, Zigzag plant
Purpose:	Ornamental house plant. Best in containers outside as it does not tolerate extreme temperatures.
Growth size:	2' to 4' high
Light:	Full sun to partial shade. If outdoors, needs protection from the hot sun.
Temperature:	Warm temps preferred. Protect in winter. Dies below 50F
Soil:	Sandy, rich well-drained
Fertilizer:	Little if any
Water:	Drought resistant. Do not over water.
Unique properties:	Rarely blooms indoors. Flowers resemble tiny red birds.
Pests & problems:	Latex sap can cause skin rash.
Propagation:	Stem cuttings

Rosemary (Rosemarinus officinales)



Google image

Type of plant:	A perennial herbal shrub
Origin:	Mediterranean region
Purpose:	A culinary herb and an ornamental plant. Will grow in pots but prefers in ground.
Growth size:	3' to 5' tall X 2' to 3' wide
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Handles heat well. A perennial in zones 9 to 11, an annual elsewhere.
Soil:	Sandy, well-drained
Fertilizer:	Light balanced
Water:	Do not over water. Once weekly is good unless extremely dry and hot.
Growth hints:	Trim to encourage bushing and desired shape.
Unique properties:	Flowers in late winter or early spring
Propagation:	Cuttings in soil

Rose, Peggy Martin (Rosa 'Peggy Martin')



Google image

Type of plant:	A New Orleans climbing rose bush
Origin:	Antique rose
AKA:	Hurricane Katrina Rose
Purpose:	Ornamental thornless rose
Growth size:	15' high X 6' wide with support fence or trellis
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	This will survive most freezes.
Soil:	Loamy well-drained
Fertilizer:	Twice a year
Water:	Drought tolerant but appreciates regular watering.
Growth hints:	Vigorous lush climber
Unique properties:	Blooms in both the spring and fall. One of few plants to survive 2 weeks of saltwater intrusion after Hurricane Katrina.
Pests & problems:	Disease resistant. Thornless but has prickles on the backs of leaves.
Propagation:	Slip cuttings

Rubber Tree (Ficus elastica)



Google image

Type of plant:	A large-leafed member of the ficus family
Origin:	Southeast Asia from India to Malaysia
AKA:	Rubber bush
Purpose:	A commercial source of latex in past times; ornamental house plant
Growth size:	Up to 10'
Light:	Bright indirect light. Can burn with direct sunlight.
Temperature:	Ideal temp is 60F to 75F. Avoid drafts and temps <40F
Soil:	Light, well-drained and well aerated
Fertilizer:	Spring & summer with diluted liquid product
Water:	Water when soil is dry. Keep well drained. Avoid "wet feet".
Growth hints:	Prune plant to desired height and shape.
Unique properties:	Clean leaves with moist soft cloth or sponge.
Pests & problems:	Sap contains latex which is a rash causing irritant.
Propagation:	Leaf or branch cuttings

Schefflera (Schefflera actinophylla)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tropical evergreen tree
Origin:	Taiwan, China, and Australia
AKA:	Australian umbrella tree
Purpose:	Ornamental house plant
Growth size:	Some species can grow to 13' tall but most are kept at 3' to 6' tall.
Light:	From minimal light to bright indirect light. Outdoors in shade
Temperature:	Likes the heat and will die back with a freeze.
Soil:	Moderate well-drained
Fertilizer:	Twice a year with slow release
Water:	Water weekly. Avoid "wet feet".
Growth hints:	Grows rapidly: prune to desired shape
Unique properties:	Good house plant that purifies the air.
Propagation:	Slip cuttings

Shrimp Plant

(Justicia betonica – White)

(Pachystachys lutea - Golden)

(Beloperone guttata – Red)

(Justicia scheidweileri - Purple)

(Cerinthe major purpurescens - Blue)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	A tropical evergreen shrub
Origin:	Mexico and Central America
Purpose:	Ornamental. Attracts pollinators.
Growth size:	2' to 4' tall X 2' wide
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Warm, humid conditions but will wilt with excessive heat.
Soil:	Moderate, well-drained
Fertilizer:	Balanced (8-8-8) 2 or 3 times annually
Water:	Drought tolerant but does best with regular watering.
Growth hints:	Pinch back to force bushing and additional blooms.
Propagation:	Slip cuttings

Spider Plant (Chlorophytum comosum)



Google image

Type of plant:	A perennial plant
Origin:	Tropical and Southern Africa
AKA:	Airplane plant, St Bernard's lily, spider ivy, ribbon plant, hen, and chickens
Purpose:	Ornamental trailing plant
Growth size:	Usually 12" high X 18" wide with runners reaching out 2' or more
Light:	Full sun but will tolerate partial shade.
Temperature:	Enjoys the heat and will go dormant with a light freeze returning in the spring.
Fertilizer:	3 or 4 times per year
Water:	Drought tolerant but flourishes with ample water. If plant looks wilted, it usually needs watering.
Growth hints:	Minimal care
Unique properties:	Purifies the air around it, releasing O ₂ , removing and breaking down pollutants.
Propagation:	Propagate by planting "pups".

Stapelia (Stapelia gigantea)



Google image

Type of plant:	A low-growing spineless succulent cactus
Origin:	Africa
AKA:	Carion flower
Purpose:	Decorative curiosity container plant. Attract pollinators.
Growth size:	12" X 12"
Light:	Full sun or slight shade
Temperature:	Handles extreme temps well. Hard freeze will kill the plant.
Soil:	Sandy well-drained
Water:	Drought resistant
Unique properties:	Furry flower and putrid odor (at close range)
Propagation:	Seeds or leaf cuttings

Stevia (Stevia rebaudiana)



Google image

Type of plant:	A woody herbal perennial
Origin:	Mountainous region of Peru and Brazil
AKA:	Sweet herb, sweet leaf
Purpose:	Culinary sweetener
Growth size:	1' to 3' tall X 18" wide
Light:	Full sunlight
Temperature:	Will die with a hard freeze. Prefers warm temps.
Soil:	Rich, well-drained soil
Fertilizer:	Every 2 weeks with a dilute liquid product
Water:	Water when the top 1" of soil gets dry.
Unique properties:	Remove the flowers to improve the taste of the leaves.
Pests & problems:	Few pest problems
Propagation:	Stem cuttings

Sunpatiens (Impatiens hawkeri hybrid)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	Perennial indoor, annual outdoors
Origin:	Original species from Indonesia. Hybrid developed in Japan.
Purpose:	Ornamental
Growth size:	14" to 20" high X 24" to 36" wide
Light:	Sun to shade
Temperature:	Warm weather plant that dies back below 35F. Winter in protected location
Soil:	Well-drained rich loam with ample organic additives
Water:	Water well and allow to drain. More water is needed with higher temps and full sun.
Growth hints:	Deadhead flowers to stimulate new blooms
Unique properties:	Flowers May to October
Pests & problems:	Bred to be resistant to downy mildew which all but decimated the impatiens cultivar.
Propagation:	seeds or cuttings

Swiss Cheese Plant (Monstera adansonii)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tropical perennial climbing vine
Origin:	Central and South America
AKA:	Swiss Cheese vine, Five holes plant
Purpose:	A decorative house plant
Growth size:	Up to 50' with proper support or trellis
Light:	Bright indirect light
Temperature:	High temperatures and humidity
Soil:	Light, well-drained. Use peat based potting soil.
Fertilizer:	Lightly every 3 or 4 months except during the dormant season.
Water:	Do not let soil dry out entirely. Do not keep soil damp.
Growth hints:	Trim the vine to maintain desired size.
Pests & problems:	Mildly toxic to pets
Propagation:	Stem cuttings

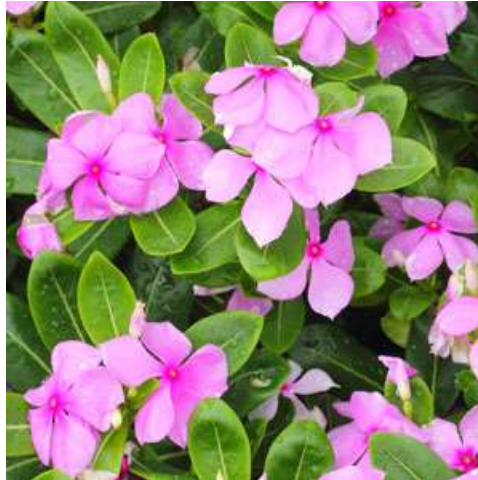
Thyme (Thymus vulgaris)



Google image

Type of plant:	A low growing herb
Origin:	Mediterranean origins
Purpose:	Culinary use. Attracts pollinators.
Growth size:	Grows low, less than 8" tall and spreads out like a carpet.
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	A warm weather plant which can die off in extreme heat and after a freeze.
Soil:	Sandy or loamy moist but well-drained soil
Water:	Do not over water.
Growth hints:	Older plants (3 years+) get woody. Split root balls and make new plants.
Unique properties:	Hundreds of varieties: taste to find your favorite.
Propagation:	Will root where plants touch the ground.

Vinca, Annual (Catharanthus roseus)



Google image

Type of plant:	A tropical perennial grown in most areas as an annual
Origin:	Madagascar
AKA:	Madagascar periwinkle (not related to the perennial ground cover called periwinkle)
Purpose:	Ornamental border plant
Growth size:	6" to 18" high with a similar spread
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Prefers warm to hot temperatures.
Soil:	Well-drained sandy loamy soil
Fertilizer:	Over feeding will reduce blooms.
Water:	Light weekly watering
Growth hints:	Blooms do not need to be deadheaded.
Unique properties:	To avoid root diseases and plant damage, plant late spring. Deer and rabbit will not eat.
Pests & problems:	Toxic to dogs and cats. Mildly toxic to humans.
Propagation:	Root cuttings in water, then transplant

Violet, Wood (Viola missouriensis)



Google image

Type of plant:	A native ground cover
Origin:	North America
AKA:	Missouri violet. Native woods violet
Purpose:	Ornamental ground cover. Attracts pollinators.
Growth size:	6" tall X 12" wide
Light:	Partial shade to full shade
Soil:	Well-drained. Rich high-organic soil
Water:	Medium
Growth hints:	Aggressive and considered invasive in some areas.
Unique properties:	Flowers and leaves are edible and high in vitamins.
Pests & problems:	Spider mites in dry weather
Propagation:	Seeds or root cuttings

Violet, Philippine (Barleria cristata)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	A perennial herbal shrub
Origin:	India and Southeast Asia
Purpose:	A hardy perennial used for tall background or hedging. Attracts pollinators.
Growth size:	4' to 5' tall
Light:	Best in partial or dappled shade
Temperature:	Loves the heat. Will die back with a frost and resume growth in the spring.
Soil:	Well-drained
Water:	Draught resistant, but water weekly during heat.
Growth hints:	Tends to get leggy. Keep pruned to desired shape.
Unique properties:	Dark green foliage with blue, lavender, or white flowers in the spring and autumn.
Propagation:	Will self-seed but not spread rapidly. Not aggressive.

Vitex (Vitex agnus-castus)



Google image

Type of plant:	A deciduous shrub or small tree
Origin:	China. Grown in North America since 1670's
AKA:	Chaste plant, chaste tree, chasteberry, monk's pepper, Texas lilac
Purpose:	Ornamental plant grown for flowers and fragrance.
Growth size:	Different cultivars vary from 4' to 20'+
Light:	Full sun to slight shade
Temperature:	Enjoys hot temperatures. Dies after a freeze but will come back in the spring.
Soil:	Prefers poor soil. Do not add a lot of compost.
Fertilizer:	Fertilize sparingly: every other year at most.
Water:	Keep well-drained.
Growth hints:	Prune back when shrub is dormant to shape. Deadhead flowers after they wilt.
Unique properties:	Has been used in alternative medicine.
Pests & problems:	This can be invasive.
Propagation:	Seeds or greenwood cuttings

Wisteria (Wisteria sinensis)



Google image

Type of plant:	A hardwood vine
Origin:	China
Purpose:	An ornamental over-growing vine
Growth size:	10' to 25' long and 8' to 10' wide
Light:	Full sun to partial shade
Temperature:	Can handle both extreme heat and freezing cold. Blooms will suffer from freezing temps.
Soil:	Slightly acidic with a lot of organics
Fertilizer:	Little fertilizer is needed.
Water:	Prefers humid conditions but can handle drier conditions if soil remains moist.
Growth hints:	Needs pruning to control growth.
Unique properties:	Poor survival if transplanted.
Pests & problems:	All parts are toxic.
Propagation:	Cuttings which are slow growing.

Yarrow (Achillea millifolium)



Google image

Type of plant:	An herbaceous perennial plant
Origin:	Europe and Asia. Introduced to North America in colonial times.
Purpose:	Medicinal herb, soap making. Attracts pollinators.
Growth size:	2' to 3' tall X 2' wide
Light:	Full sun
Soil:	Loamy, sand, clay well-drained soil
Fertilizer:	Little or no fertilizer
Water:	Does not like "wet feet" or swampy areas. Drought tolerant
Growth hints:	Deadhead to prolong flowering. Low maintenance
Unique properties:	Deer and rabbits will not eat this plant.
Pests & problems:	Aphids, powdery mildew, rust
Propagation:	Divide as needed in spring or fall.

Yesterday Today Tomorrow Plant (Brunfelsia pauciflora)



Photo by P Andres

Type of plant:	A tropical perennial shrub plant
Origin:	Brazil
AKA:	Morning noon and night, Kiss me quick, Brazil raintree
Purpose:	Ornamental display
Growth size:	4' X 6' tall and wide
Light:	Full sun
Temperature:	Warm temperatures. Place in container in cooler climes. Bring indoor with freezing temperatures.
Soil:	Moderate well-drained
Fertilizer:	Light with higher potassium
Water:	Water regularly. Avoid "wet feet".
Growth hints:	Slow growing.
Unique properties:	Flower opens violet and lightens to white after 3 days.
Pests & problems:	All parts of the plant are toxic.
Propagation:	Cuttings and seeds