

Arisaema - Care Guide

Caring For Arisaema

These peculiar plants from the Himalayas are tuberous perennials from moist woodland and rocky areas. They are best grown outdoors in partial shade in a border or in pots in the greenhouse. Gardeners should be aware that all parts of the plant are poisonous.

Arisaema are grown for their attractive and unusual inflorescences. The flowers are called spathes and are followed by dense clusters of red berries.

In summer *A. consanguineum* produces a hooded, white striped and brown tinged green spathe 4-8in long. The spathe forms below a solitary leaf which grows up to 3ft and has 11 to 20 ovate leaflets up to 8in long.

A. speciosum 'Magnificum' has a hooded, trailing white striped purple spathe 4-6in long in spring or early summer. Again the plant produces only a single three palmate leaf on a single stem about 2ft tall.

The tubers should be planted at least 6in deep in the garden. Long, deep pots are needed to grow the tubers properly in the greenhouse. Here the leaves and flower may eventually need some support. Arisaema prefer moist well drained soil and a good mulching in winter both to protect the plant from frosts and to increase the fertility of the soil. In pots these plants can be watered freely in growth and fed periodically with liquid fertiliser.

These plants will produce offsets but the prominent seed heads will, when ripe, produce a copious quantity of seeds which can readily be sown in containers in the autumn or spring.

Images to follow

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