

## Puya - Growing Guide

### Growing Puya

Only once in 30 years have we managed to exhibit a huge flowering spike of this extraordinary plant. Even then the flower spike came from Tresco in the Isles of Scilly. Since puya flower only once in their lifetime before the plant dies, and you may have to wait up to 30 years or more for this to occur, you can see the problem with exhibiting this plant at any show!

These plants will only grow outside in the warmest, hottest and driest coastal locations with any chance of flowering but flower outside they do in Penzance, Falmouth and at Ventnor Botanic Gardens in the Isle of Wight. The two species of this bromeliad from the rocky slopes of the high Andes in South America which are most likely to succeed in coastal western gardens are *P. berteroniana* (blue-green flowers) and *P. chilensis* (yellow-green flowers).



*Puya berteroniana*



*Puya berteroniana*



Puya berteroniana

Puya will tolerate a few degrees of frost with no ill effect but they are really greenhouse plants best grown not in pots but in an open and upraised bed. Waterlogging and over watering is the quickest way to kill these succulent plants. At Renshaw gardens near Sheffield puyas are doing well in a warm conservatory set against a well drained sunny wall. If growing them outside they need to be on a raised bank in full sun but with wind protection.

Even if you never manage to flower your puya the foliage effect is good enough. If you can grow yuccas and agaves successfully you can probably attempt puya outside too.



Puya chilensis



Puya chilensis



Puya chilensis



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