

# aphelandra



APHELANDRA SQUARROSA  
ZEBRA PLANT

## BOTANICAL NAME

*Aphelandra squarrosa*  
(af-el-AN-druh skwah-RO-sa)

## COMMON NAME

Zebra plant

## DESCRIPTION

*Aphelandras* are compact plants that grow up to 3 feet tall and 2 feet wide. They have white-veined, glossy green foliage and flower spikes at the stem ends.

## COLORS

The colors of *Aphelandras*' flowers vary depending on the species. The most popular species, *A. squarrosa*, has yellow or golden flowers. There are also species with orange-scarlet, scarlet and pink flowers.

## CONSUMER LIFE

*Aphelandras* will begin flowering when the plants are only a few months old. They typically bloom from late summer through fall. With proper care, the plants will bloom continuously for several months.

## AVAILABILITY

*Aphelandras* are available year-round.

## in-store and consumer care

**LIGHT** Bright, indirect light is best for *Aphelandras* that are displayed indoors.

**WATER** Keep the compost moist at all times with soft, tepid water, but do not allow it to become waterlogged. Water in the early part of the day. Avoid standing water on the foliage. Reduce watering in winter.

**TEMPERATURE** *Aphelandras* are sensitive to low temperatures. The plants will do best if nighttime temperatures are maintained at 65 F to 75 F and daytime temperatures average 75 F.

**HUMIDITY** *Aphelandras* need moderate to high humidity. Mist the leaves frequently.



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**FERTILIZER** Fertilized plants are more tolerant of insect attacks. Be sure plants are watered well before applying fertilizer.

**SOIL** These plants thrive in a potting mixture that has equal parts of loam, peat moss and sand.

**GROOMING** Do not pinch off the tips of the shoots. The idea is to produce one stem with one large spike of flowers. Cut these plants back when they have finished flowering to remove straggly branches and faded blossoms. Trimming also will stimulate new, healthy growth.

**TOXICITY** These plants can be toxic if eaten. Keep them out of the reach of children or pets. Handling them may cause skin irritation or allergic reactions.

## challenges

**ETHYLENE SENSITIVITY** *Aphelandras* are sensitive to ethylene gas. Check with your supplier to make sure your plants have been treated with an ethylene inhibitor at the grower or transportation level.

**BROWN LEAF TIPS** Low air humidity is usually the cause.

**LOSS OF LEAVES** This may be caused by dryness at the roots, cold air, too much sun or drafts.

## fun facts

**WHAT'S IN A NAME** The genus name "*Aphelandra*" comes from the Greek name for "simple anther," the pollen-bearing part of the stamen.

**FAMILY** *Aphelandras* are members of the *Acanthaceae* (*Acanthus*) family. Relatives include firecracker flower (*Crossandra*), black-eyed Susan vine (*Thunbergia*) and shrimp plant (*Justicia*).

**ORIGINS** The plants are native to the tropical Americas, especially Brazil.



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**PESTS** Check the plants frequently for aphids, spider mites and whiteflies. Control them with insecticidal soap. [sfr](#)

Some information provided by:  
University of Florida, <http://mrec.ifas.ufl.edu/research.asp>  
Dave's Garden, <http://davesgarden.com>  
Botany.com, [www.botany.com/aphelandra.html](http://www.botany.com/aphelandra.html)  
The Chain of Life Network®, [www.chainoflifenet.org](http://www.chainoflifenet.org)  
The New House Plant Expert, by Dr. D.G. Hessayon

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Reach "Blooming Plant of the Month" writer Steven W. Brown, AIFD, at [sbfloral@aol.com](mailto:sbfloral@aol.com) or (415) 239-3140.

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