

February 2009

Plants of the Month

Anthurium, Flamingo flower

Anthurium andraeanum

With a pink or red splash of color, Anthurium or Flamingo flower is welcome on any winter day, especially Valentine's Day. The striking long-lasting flowers of this houseplant provide the color, while its dark green, leathery, arrow-shaped leaves are attractive on their own. Botanically speaking, the flowers consist of a flat spathe surrounding a twisted spadix. Easy care anthuriums bloom in medium light locations. Keep the soil moist during periods of active growth, and fertilize with a houseplant fertilizer that is high in phosphorus. Keep away from pets and children because ingesting anthurium parts causes mouth irritation and stomach distress.



English Primrose

Primula vulgaris

Primroses are one of the first perennial flowers available in spring, because they are among the most cold tolerant and early blooming. Pop them in the ground and enjoy them for years. There are countless cultivars in yellow, purple, white and pinks. Their shallow roots require consistent moisture. Well drained soil is important, but Maryland clay soil can be a plus because it retains moisture. Give them substantial shade such as a northwest location. Plants go dormant in the summer and reappear in the fall. Find them a happy place, and they will flourish for years and even need dividing.



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Pussywillow, Goat willow

Salix caprea

It's hard not to feel fond of a plant you can pet. The furry catkins on goat willow are so much larger than ordinary pussywillows that they resemble lucky rabbit's feet. They even have "toes". A fun small tree, goat willow grows fast to 15-25' tall and 12-15' wide. Its narrow dark green leaves are lighter underneath. Perfect for winter interest, it buds in late winter. To enjoy it indoors, cut branches as soon as the silky gray catkins emerge. Eventually they will burst into fuzzy yellowish blooms. Plant in full sun and moist soil for the healthiest growth.



Have a pest or gardening question?

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