



Air Plants Care

Tillandsia is the largest genus in the bromeliad family, accounting for approximately 550 of the over 2500 species of bromeliads. They are native to the warmer climates of the Americas. Commonly known as airplants, they are found from jungle rain forest to arid desert environments – from sea level to high mountain regions.

Most Tillandsia species use their root systems to attach themselves to trees or rocks and absorb moisture and nutrients through their leaves. This classifies them as epiphytes. Absorption occurs through small scales on their leaves called trichomes. These trichomes are what give many air plants their silver or gray appearance. There is enormous variety in size, shape, texture, bloom and color of these bromeliads. Many of these unique plants undergo a dramatic color change as they prepare to bloom. Some have a very luscious and unequaled fragrance. Since tillandsias are epiphytes, the mounting medium you choose is limited only by your imagination.

These hardy plants are adaptable and tolerant to a wide range of environmental conditions and require minimal care. The three most important requirements are bright light, although not direct sun, good air circulation and water.

INDOOR CARE LIGHT: An East or North window would be best. Bright light or filtered sun is recommended. If these light conditions are not possible, a broad spectrum fluorescent light will provide short term light requirements for your plants.

WATER: Submerge the air plant completely for a minimum of an hour every 2-3 weeks in the summer months and 3-4 weeks in the winter months. Be sure to tip your air plant upside down to drain excess water after submerging. However, it may be necessary to water more often due to dryer, less humid air caused by air-conditioning or heating. If your plant's leaves start to curl or roll (nature's way of conserving moisture), it could be an indication of dehydration.

FERTILIZATION: If you wish to make your plants extra happy you should fertilize about once a month. Use a good quality liquid or water soluble fertilizer with a formulation low in copper. (High amounts of copper are toxic to bromeliads.) Fertilizing is not absolutely necessary to survival, but will increase the growth and vigor of your plants and their blooms.

MOUNTING: Some suggestions are driftwood, tree limbs, cork, clay pottery, , rocks or stones of any kind. As tillandsias tend to grow in colonies or clusters of plants, many look very nice just hanging with no mounting at all. There are only a few things you must consider carefully when choosing your mounting. Make sure the media you select does not hold water. Do not use treated wood as most is impregnated with a copper solution to help prevent wood rot. This copper is very toxic to bromeliads.

Several different adhesives are used for securing the plant onto the mount. For example; Liquid Nails, hot glue, or E6000. We recommend E6000 because it is colorless, extremely strong, water proof, and non-toxic to plants. Use a small amount of adhesive near the base of the plant, but not on the bottom. Avoid covering the area where the roots form. With E6000 it will take about 30 minutes to 1 hour depending on the size and weight of the plant.

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