

Dracaena draco - Dragon Tree or Dragons Blood Tree

This is a palm-like evergreen from the Canary Islands slowly growing to a height of up to 20m. The name comes from the red sap of this tree that was sold as Dragon's Blood and was said to be used by the ancient Egyptians during the embalming process. It was considered part of any witchcraft toolkit.

The foliage can be brilliant and frequently variegated with red, yellow and green stripes along the edges of mostly green sword shaped leaves. They are winter hardy in areas not subject to heavy frost but can be grown indoors everywhere else. Dracaenas will grow very well indoors if given plenty of light, rich garden soil, heat and moisture. Given time, this tree can become quite large but in containers they are not likely to attain a height of over 3 – 3.5m for many decades.

Propagation

Sow in a warm situation in seedling mix 1cm underground, around 20-30°C. Keep moist but not damp. Germination in 3 - 6 weeks.

Prick the young seedlings out into individual pots at about 3cm or as desired.

Give plenty of light, rich garden soil, heat and moisture.

Potting media used for growing Dracaenas should be free from pests, well drained and moisture retentive. Small plants grow well in a mix composed predominately of organic components. Larger plants growing in shadehouses should have a heavier mix, often composed of 10 to 20% sand, to prevent wind toppling. The potting medium should be adjusted to a pH range of 6.0 to 6.5 prior to sticking or potting plants. Elevating pH levels above 7.0 has been shown to cause Iron deficiencies.