



OTHER GENERA

There are over 70 bromeliad genera. It is not practical to attempt to discuss them all. Here are some notes on a few to provide a start in understanding how to grow some of the ones not as commercially available.

ANDROLEPIS, ANANAS, ARAEOCOCCUS, ORTHOPHYTUM, SINCORAEA,

X NEOPHYTUM, X SINCOREGELIA: These have all been lumped together since most seem to thrive on similar treatment. Androlepis and Ananas (Pineapple) are large plants that can tolerate full sun. The others are more manageable in size and enjoy bright filtered sun. All do well with rich soil,

generous pot size, regular feeding and plenty of moisture. Most prefer warm weather and growth is slowed during winter months.

QUESNELIA, HOHENBERGIA, PORTEA: There are some big, spiny plants in these genera. Quesnelia is the most cold hardy, most surviving outdoors under trees in Central Florida. Portea is the next hardiest, while Hohenbergia are always very tender. Strong light & cessation of feeding when the plants are mature produces best foliage color and promotes blooming. Be selective growing Hohenbergia. There are some real beauties, but others are rather large with less spectacular blooms.

CRYPTANTHUS: Cryptanthus are mostly smaller sized plants that are found in the dappled light of clearings in tropical forests. They are true terrestrials that lack a 'cup' to hold water. Do not mount them on driftwood or rocks. Unlike most bromeliads, the Cryptanthus like a rich soil that never goes dry. If in doubt, water them. They can be fertilized at full label strength. The best foliage color will be achieved in bright filtered sun. Avoid direct sun except early in the morning.

CANISTRUM, X CANMEA: These take similar treatment. A standard well-drained bromeliad potting mix suits them. Give them plenty of moisture but avoid soggy wet conditions. Fertilize regularly using half-strength. Light levels of about 60% shade give good results. Avoid direct hot sun.

NIDULARIUM: Nidulariums resemble Neoregelias, but instead of the leaves around the central cup flushing bright reds or purples, there is a low-rise inflorescence with colorful bracts allowing individual flowers to peek out. *Nidularium innocentii* has white flowers among red bracts, making a striking contrast. Nidulariums are more tolerant of shade and wet conditions, often thriving in spots under trees where Neoregelias do not receive enough light to flourish. Fertilize lightly on a monthly basis for best results, but if grown outdoors fertilization is not necessary.

PITCAIRNIA: This genus is more like the ancient ancestors of bromeliads than the varieties more commonly seen. The foliage is often grassy and spreading. The blooms are spectacular in bright colors of red, yellow and orange, and are more like some sort of bizarre lily or iris than what people expect a bromeliad bloom to look like. Pitcairnia habitat is damp creek banks and shady locations. Keep them moist during the warm months of the year. Several species seem to enjoy a dormant, dry rest period for a couple of months during winter, often blooming when watering is resumed. Frequent light fertilization results in robust spreading foliage as lush as any nursery foliage plant.

PUYA: This is the genus of giants found as terrestrials at high elevations in the Andes, but there are a few of manageable size that can be grown in Florida. The Puya can tolerate direct sun, and should have a large pot for the extensive root system. A cactus-succulent type of potting mix suits them and regular fertilization keeps them happy. Water when they begin to dry, but do not let the mix stay wet. If in doubt, delay watering.