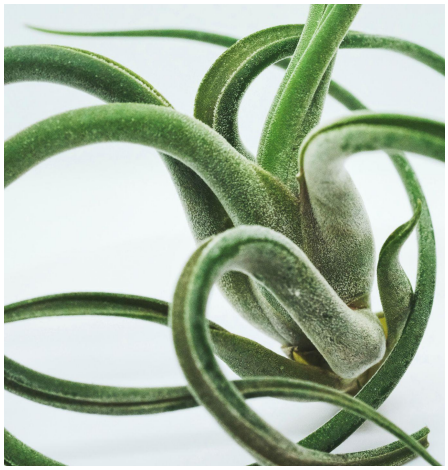
REEMS CREEK NURSERY

Tillandsia
Air Plant

A Garden Guide



Native from the southern US all the way down to Argentina, Tillandsia are unusual plants in the Bromeliaceae (Bromeliad) family. The Tillandsia that we carry are epiphytes - they do not grow in soil - but rather grow in the branches of trees, or on (but not in) the forest floor. These evergreen perennial plants have brightly colored blooms, after their long bloom period they will produce new plants ("pups"), and the parent plant will slowly die. Their small roots are used for stabilization or gripping onto surfaces; they absorb water and nutrients through their leaves via their trichomes. There are many fun and creative ways to house and display air plants.

Light: Air plants prefer bright to medium filtered light. Supplemental lighting may be used.

Water: Watering needs depend on light and humidity. When foliage turns silver and soft, mist until dripping or occasionally soak fully submerged in a bin, until they turn green and firm. A popular approach is daily misting, with once a week 15-30 minute soak in water. Aside from their soak, do not allow them to sit in water for extended periods. In order to prevent rot, after misting or watering, allow them to dry upside down or on their sides for a few hours, before returning them to their usual home. The ideal water is rainwater. Clean spring, creek, or lake water is also excellent. Avoid distilled or overly filtered (such as reverse osmosis) water.

Fertilization: Fertilizing is not necessary, however it can hasten blooming and therefore the production of new pups. Weak fertilizer, such as Espoma Organic Liquid House Plant Food can be added once a month during a misting or soaking.

Maintenance: It is normal for lower leaves to die off as the plants grow. Dead leaves can be carefully removed. When your plant has pups, once they are 1/3rd the size of the parent plant they can be separated with a sharp clean blade.

Temperature: 50F or higher is best, however they can be grown outdoors year round in frost free areas.

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76 Monticello Road Weaverville, NC 28787 828-645-3937 https://reemscreek.com/