Tropical Plant Identifications
Adonidia Palm

*Veitchia merrillii*

**Light:** High Light

**Water:** Water regularly; do not over water.

**Bugs:** Spider Mites

**Characteristics:** It has a single slender gray stem that is smooth, sectioned by leaf scar rings and is swollen at the base. A short green crownshaft supports a neatly compact crown of about a dozen, plus or minus a few feather leaves. These are arched and about 5 ft long with leaflet that are about 2 ft long and 2 inches wide.
Aglaonema

Chinese Evergreen

**Light:** Low

**Water:** Evenly moist and not allowed to completely dry out. If plant starts to look wilty and soil is dry, water immediately.

**Bugs:** Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** Chinese evergreen, or aglaonema, is a versatile low light, low growing, and durable plant. They are produced in many different varieties. The foliage is either silvery green with some dark green or the reverse, mostly dark green with light green streaks.

Pruning: Remove discolored lower leaves. Pull off greenish booms.
**Algerian Ivy**

*Hedera canariensis (h. algeriensis)*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Spider mites

**Characteristics:** Plant ivy in regular potting mix and keep the soil moist. Grow in bright light, cool temperatures, and low to medium humidity. Keep vines trimmed back for bushier growth.
Alocasia

Light: Medium to High

Water: Water regularly; do not over water

Bugs:

Characteristics: These plants (commonly known as African Masks and Elephant’s Ears) are mainly valued for the gorgeous leaves, which are very large, heart- or spade-shaped and beautiful colored and variegated in gleaming shades of green, purple, bluish-green, red and bronze. Long stalks are topped with heart shaped puckered leaves.
Anthurium
Flamingo Flower, Pigtail Plant

**Light:** High

**Water:** Dry

**Bugs:** Gnat, Scale, Mealy Bug (rare)

**Characteristics:** The foliage is shiny and dark green, while the flowers are very showy. Available in reds, pinks, lavender, and white, the flowers are heart shaped, and can last up to 8 weeks. Anthuriums require little care, and bloom almost continuously in good conditions. This blooming plant likes bright light and needs to dry out to the touch between watering, making good drainage essential.

**Pruning:** Remove dead & unsightly foliage at base of plant. Remove any faded or brown flowers.
Balfour Aralia

*Polyscias balfouriana*

**Light:** Place in medium (indirect) light. Tolerates full sun for several hours a day.

**Water:** Keep moist at all times.

**Bugs:** Aphids, Spider Mites

**Characteristics:** There are several types of Balfour aralia, *Polices balfouriana*, offering round leaves that are deeply veined, giving the leaves a crinkled appearance. Plain Balfour has large size, glossy, dark-green leaves. Its stems are also green and decorated by gray spots. Two common variation of Balfour aralia are “Marginata” with leaves that are delicately edged with creamy white and “Pennockii” offer foliage that is larger than regular Balfour and is strikingly mottled with light yellow-green areas.
False Aralia

*Dizygotheca elegantissima*

**Light:** Expose to medium (bright indirect) light. Avoid full sun. Grows well if under artificial light 16 hours per day.

**Water:** Keep soil moist.

**Bugs:** Spider mites, Scale

**Characteristics:** The five-fingered leaflets of this plant are very narrow and slightly serrated. When the new foliage first emerges, the leaves are glossy and almost copper colored. As the leaves mature, they darken until they are almost black. When selecting a false aralia, look for a plant with many stems. It tends to lose its older leaves as it matures, and a multi-stemmed plant will look better longer. It can grow 4-6 feet tall.
Ming Aralia

Polyscias fruticosa

**Light:** Expose to medium (indirect) light. Plant tolerates full sun for several hours a day.

**Water:** Keep moist at all times. Water less during winter.

**Bugs:** Spider Mites

**Characteristics:** Ming aralias are graceful, bushy upright plants covered with lacy, bright-green foliage. There are several varieties of Ming aralia available and their ultimate size can vary from 2 to 4 feet.
Schefflera Arboricola

*Heptapleurum arboricolum*

**Light:** Medium to High. No direct sun.

**Water:** Keep soil moist.

**Bugs:** Spider mites or scale

**Characteristics:** The tree form, or “standard” offers height; the bush form covers space.

**Pruning:** They grow wildly, but it is easy to keep them shaped by either tip pruning or removing whole stem sections.
Areca Palm

*Chrysalidocarpus lutescens*

**Light:** Moderate to Bright

**Water:** Keep soil evenly moist, but not wet. Make sure the pot has good drainage.

**Bugs:** Spider mites, White Palm Scale

**Characteristics:** Feather-like green fronds radiating from several trunks characterize the Areca Palm. This houseplant is beautiful when new, however overtime the Areca Palms attractive appearance can diminish slightly. Fronds when bigger may droop and bend over. The Areca Palm is a slow grower. It will grow wider before taller.

**Pruning:** Remove whole fronds as they yellow. Areca are sensitive to salts and minerals in their water and show a spotting like freckles on their foliage. When damage on the fronds becomes predominant, cut these fronds off as well.
Aspidistra Elatior

Cast-Iron Plant

Light: Low

Water: Medium Wet

Bugs: Spider mites, Scale

Characteristics: Aspidistra is the most durable plant around, quite able to survive some neglect in care and low light conditions. It is a medium sized bush-form plant. The dark green leaves are leathery, oblong, and shiny, and grow 20 inches long and 3 to 4 inches wide. They have no stem or petiole. The brown to dull purple, bell-shaped flowers are only rarely seen. They are produced at the soil level, and are usually hidden by foliage.

Care: The best care is to water the plant thoroughly and allow the medium to slightly dry completely between waterings. The plant can tolerate neglect; however, over watering can be a problem.
Bamboo Palm

*Chamaedorea erumpens*

**Light:** Medium

**Water:** Keep soil evenly moist

**Bugs:** Spider mites, Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** This attractive indoor palm produces long bamboo-like canes which in time form a tall, columnar shaped plant. It grows up to 5 feet.
Bird of Paradise

*Stritzia reginae*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Allow soil surface to dry out between thorough waterings.

**Bugs:** Mealy bug, Spider mites

**Characteristics:** Bird of Paradise is a spectacular, but extremely slow-growing plant. It's noted for spear like leaves and unusual flowers. The 6-8' leaves are grey-green and arranged in fans atop the trunks. The bird-like flowers are composed of a dark blue bract, white sepals & bluish-purple “tongue”. The entire “bird” can be as large as 7” high by 18” long and is typically held just above the point where the leaf fan emerges from the trunk. Flowers are followed by triangular seed capsules.
Bromeliad

*Bromeliaceae*

**Light:** Medium to high

**Water:** Let dry slightly between thorough waterings

**Bugs:**

**Characteristics:** Upright plant with long arched green or variegated leaves. Most varieties are under 30” in height and under 24” wide.
**Cactus**

*Cacti*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Dry between waterings

**Bugs:** Mealy Bug, Scale

**Characteristics:** Cacti are distinctive and unusual plants, which have adapted to extremely arid and hot environments, showing a wide range of anatomical and physiological features which conserve water. Their stems have expanded into green succulent structures containing the chlorophyll necessary for life and growth, while the leaves have become the spines for which cacti are so well known.
**Croton**

*Codiaeum Variegatum*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Spider Mite, Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** Croton is an unusual, but striking plant with leaf colors of yellow, pink, red, and orange. The will wilt if the soil completely dries out. Crisp crunchy leaf ends indicate soil is staying too moist. Crotons are available in many different leaf colors and leaf shapes.
Dieffenbachia

*Dieffenbachia*

**Light:** Medium to High

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Spider Mite, Scale, Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** Dumb cane gets its name from toxic leaves and stems that cause numbness in the tongue when eaten. The leaves break easily, so high traffic areas are not recommended. They are grown in many different varieties.
**English Ivy**

*Hedera helix*

**Light:** Medium

**Water:** Keep evenly moist.

**Bugs:** Spider mites

**Characteristics:** English Ivy is a species of ivy native to most of Europe and southwest Asia. It is an evergreen climbing plant, growing to 20-30 m high where suitable surfaces (trees, cliffs, walls) are available, and also growing as ground cover where there are no vertical surfaces. It holds on to tree bark and rock by means of short adhesive rootlets. The *helix* part of the name refers to where there are spirals in the leaves.
Ficus Alii

Ficus maclellandii 'Alii'

**Light:** High

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Scale, Mealy bug, Spider mites

**Characteristics:** An upright plant found in bush or tree form. Height depends on plant form. Maximum height 15' plus. 'Alii' was introduced in the plant industry about 10 years ago. Its long slender leaves give it a bit of an oriental look (A little like bamboo). It has relatively dense foliage; glossy leaves grow from 3 inches to 10 inches long. New growth is sometimes tinted bronze and later matures to a deep, rich green.
Ficus Benjamina

Ficus Benjamina

**Light:** High

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Scale, Mealy Bug, Spider Mite

**Characteristics:** Keep the soil watered, but let the top two inches of soil dry out. Letting the soil become extremely dry will result in dry, and yellow, leaf drop. New green leaves dropping off can be a sign of over watering. When this occurs the plant is in trouble, make sure it is using the water you give it.

**Pruning:** These plants when new have a tendency to drop a noticeable amount of leaves. Don’t panic, this is due to the trees being grown in ideal conditions, they are adjusting to your environment. The leaf loss may occur over several months. Pick up fallen leaves and remove yellow ones still on the plant. Cut off dead and dry twigs. This helps light to penetrate to the inside foliage, to promote growth on the inside.
Ficus Lyrata  
“Fiddle Leaf Fig”

*Ficus Lyrata*

**Light:** Medium to High

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Spider Mite, Scale, Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** The leaves are wide and stiff, and shaped like the body of a fiddle. They can be bought in bush or tree form.
Janet Craig Bush

Dracaena Deremensis

Light: Low

Water: Slightly Dry

Bugs: Mealy Bug

Characteristics: Janet Craig is noted for their dark green glossy leaves and their tolerance for low light. Dracaenas have wide leaves that do accumulate dust. Wipe leaves regularly with a damp cloth to remove dust.
Janet Craig Compacta

*Dracaena Deremensis*

**Light:** Low

**Water:** Slightly Dry

**Bugs:** Mealy Bug

**Characteristics:** As the name suggests the dark green leaves are small and grow in tidy, compact profusion around the slow growing branches.
Janet Craig Lisa Cane

*Dracaena Deremensis*

**Light:** Low

**Water:** Slightly Dry

**Bugs:** Mealy Bug

**Characteristics:** Dracaena Lisa is grown in Hawaii and is one of the best low light upright plants. It is similar to Dracaena Janet Craig but has a more narrow leaf. It is great for a narrow low light location in a home or office. The dark green foliage with the staggered height of the cane makes a statement.
Kalanchoe

*Kalanchoe blossfeldiana*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Allow soil to dry out between thorough waterings

**Bugs:** Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** Christmas kalanchoe boast clusters of starlike flowers that stay in bloom night & day. Blossom colors include scarlet, orange & yellow.
Kentia Palm
Howeia Forsteriana

Light: Medium
Water: Moist
Bugs: Spider Mite, Palm Scale

Characteristics: The fronds are long and finger-like, and bend downward gracefully.
Lipstick Plant

*Aeschynanthus*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Evenly moist

**Bugs:** Mealy bug, Spider mites

**Characteristics:** The lipstick plant has trailing stems with leathery leaves and red flowers.
**Marginata**

“Dragon Tree”

*Dracaena Marginata*

**Light:** Medium

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Spider Mites, Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** Marginatas usually have a lot of woody stalk showing and are grown upright with the foliage or head just at the top. They can be anywhere from 2 feet to 20 feet tall. More expensive plants have had their stems weighted down during production growing to make curves and bends in the stalks. They can resemble a candelabrum. The leaves are dark green with a dark red margin around the outer edge.
Massangeana Cane
“Corn Plant”

*Dracaena Fragrans*

**Light:** Low

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Mealy bug, Spider mites

**Characteristics:** These are low light plants that offer height, while keeping to a narrow space. Plants are sold with canes grouped in a pot varying in height. At the top of the canes emerge green foliage that looks like a corn stalk. Its wide leaves are long and arc gracefully from the stalk. A dramatic yellow variegation runs down the center of its leaves.
Neanthebella Palm
“Parlor Palm”

*Chamaedorea Elegans*

**Light:** Low

**Water:** Slightly dry

**Bugs:** Spider Mites, Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** Neanthebella stays thick and green with little light. Small, graceful palm with pinnate fronds spirally arranged around the trunk; fast growing.
Norfolk Island Pine

*Araucaria Hetrophylla*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Spider Mites, Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** Norfolk pines have distinctively flat branches and short soft needles. Graceful and well-shaped, Norfolk Island pine has the delicately opposed branches of a pine tree. Needles are stiff, but soft. The tree grows slowly, producing one tier on opposed branches each year.
Philodendron Cordatum

*Philodendron*

**Light:** Medium

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Mealy Bug

**Characteristics:** Most of the plants have rich green leaves but some may be coppery-red underneath or have veins that are red. Some leaves are red when they are young but eventually turn green. Some kinds have heart-shaped leaves, others have long and narrow leaves, and some are arrow-shaped, oblong, ovate or deeply lobed. Their size varies from 3 inches to 3 feet in length.
**Pleomele**

*Dracaena pleomele*
*Reflexa & Song of India*

**Light:** Medium

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Mealy bug, Spider Mite

**Characteristics:** Pleomele has narrow, leathery leaves that are edged with pale strips in variegated varieties. It is dense and bushy, but can reach up to 12 feet in height. It's often called Dracaena reflexa.
Podocarpus

*Podocarpus macrophyllus*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Allow soil surface to dry out between thorough waterings.

**Bugs:** Spider mites, Mealy bug, Scale

**Characteristics:** Podocarpus has an airy, feathery look. Leaves get quite large – up to 4 inches long – and deep green with age.
Poinsettia

*Euphorbia pulcherrima*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Keep moist

**Bugs:** White fly, Gnats

**Characteristics:** Leaves are oval and lobed with pointed tip and are green with prominent lighter veins. New stems are red. Leaf like red bracts surround small yellow flowers. The poinsettia only blooms during short days (long nights). Although considered a traditional Christmas plant, white and pink poinsettias are being seen at Easter. Often used in mass displays in large interior planters.
Ponytail Palm

*Beaucarnea recurvata*

**Light:** High

**Water:** Slightly Dry

**Bugs:** Mealy Bug, Spider Mite

**Characteristics:** The ponytail palm takes its name from its resemblance to hair cascading out of a ponytail. It’s also called a “bottle palm” because its trunk becomes a bottle like bulb at soil level. It stores water at its base, giving the plant’s bottom it distinctive swollen look.
**Pothos**

*Scindapsus aureus*

**Light:** Medium

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Mealy bug, Spider mites

**Characteristics:** Pothos, which is said to be a native name for the plant, is a vining plant that is typically seen in its immature form. In this juvenile state, the leaves, which alternate up the rope-like green stem, are heart-shaped and up to five inches long. The leaves are blotched with irregular patches of gold and serve as a kind of mood ring for the plant. When it is healthy and happy and all is well in its world, it will reward you with lots of golden variegation. When it is sulky or feeling mistreated it will turn almost completely green.
Rhapis Palm

*Rhapis Excelsa*

**Light:** Medium

**Water:** Moist

**Bugs:** Spider Mite, Mealy bug, & Palm Scale

**Characteristics:** Rhapis Palm has very shiny dark leaves. Their fronds stretch out like fingers on a hand from an upright furry trunk.
Sago Palm

*Cycas revoluta*

**Light:** Medium

**Water:** Keep evenly moist

**Bugs:** Scale, Spider mites, Mealy bug

**Characteristics:** Sago palm, despite its name, is not really a palm. Its trunk resembles a pinecone supporting fernlike fronds up to 5 feet long.
Sansevieria  
“Mother-in-law’s Tongue”  

Sansevieria trifasciata

Light: Low

Water: Dry

Bugs:

Characteristics: Sansevieria leaves are stiff and sturdy without being sharp. There are several color choices, dark green, green with yellow edging, pale green, light yellow and light green.
Spathiphyllum
“Peace Lily”

*Spathiphyllum*

**Light:** Medium

**Water:** Moist, if allowed to dry the plant will wilt badly

**Bugs:** Scale

**Characteristics:** Spathiphyllum come in many varieties, from small delicate leafed plants to ones with giant elongated leaves. They can all produce a white bloom.
Warneckii
Dracaena Deremensis

**Light:** Low

**Water:** Slightly Dry

**Bugs:** Mealy Bug

**Characteristics:** Warneckii are sold both in short bushy and tall cane forms. Its foliage is narrower than “Janet Craig” and comes to a sharper point, with distinctive white stripes running lengthwise in the leaves center.
ZZ Plant

Zamioculcas zamifolio

**Light:** Low

**Water:** Slightly Dry

**Bugs:** Mealy bug, Scale

**Characteristics:** ZZ plant produces 2’-3’ long pointed spears line with alternating shiny dark leaves.
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