

Zebrina Banana

Musa acuminata 'Zebrina'



Zebrina Banana
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 6 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Musa zebrina

Description:

A small, upright banana cultivated for both fruit and ornamental purposes; best suited to warm temperate climates, but are often root hardy in mild winter zones; a nice, manageable container plant or landscape accent

Ornamental Features

Zebrina Banana is a wonderfully ornamental plant with characteristically tropical foliage and a distinctive habit of growth. Its attractive enormous oval leaves remain bluish-green in color with showy burgundy variegation throughout the season. The yellow fruits are held in clusters from mid summer to late fall. The brick red stems are very colorful and add to the overall interest of the plant.



Zebrina Banana foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Zebrina Banana is an herbaceous tropical perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its wonderfully bold, coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced garden composition.

This plant will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Zebrina Banana is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Zebrina Banana will grow to be about 6 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

Bananas are curious plants in a botanical sense. Strictly speaking they are perennials, with individual shoots rising up from underground rhizomes and maturing in one to two years, then ultimately dying after producing fruit, to be replaced by new shoots from the base. However, given their ultimate size and coarseness they almost behave as small trees in the landscape. This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Zebrina Banana is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.