

Blood Banana

Musa sumatrana 'Rojo'



Blood Banana foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 8 feet

Spread: 6 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Blood Leaf Banana, Variegated Blood Banana

Description:

A highly ornamental variety grown for foliage, featuring dramatic red variegation splashed upon broad, shiny green leaves; psudeostem is solid dark red; a great garden, container, or landscape accent; wind and cold resistant

Ornamental Features

Blood Banana is a wonderfully ornamental plant with characteristically tropical foliage and a distinctive habit of growth. Its attractive enormous glossy oval leaves remain green in color with showy dark red variegation and tinges of burgundy throughout the year. The red fruits are held in clusters from late fall to late winter. The dark red stems are very colorful and add to the overall interest of the plant.

Landscape Attributes

Blood Banana is an herbaceous evergreen 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.

Blood Banana is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Blood Banana will grow to be about 8 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 6 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years. As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round.

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 pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.

Blood 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.