Italian Arum

Arum italicum



Italian Arum foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 12 inches

Flower Height: 18 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Cuckoo Pint, Lords-and-Ladies, Painted Arum

Description:

Grown mostly for glossy arrowhead-shaped leaves with glowing chartreuse veins, resembles our native Jack-in-the-Pulpit; goes dormant in summer, handling can cause skin irritation; will also grow indoors

Ornamental Features

Italian Arum features showy bracted creamy white hooded flowers with white sheaths rising above the foliage in mid spring. Its attractive large glossy pointy leaves remain grayish green in color with distinctive chartreuse veins throughout the season. It produces orange berries from late summer to late fall.

Landscape Attributes

Italian Arum is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other garden plants with finer foliage.

This is a high maintenance plant that will require regular care and upkeep, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Invasive

Italian Arum is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Italian Arum will grow to be about 12 inches tall at maturity extending to 18 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 18 inches. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 10 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! As this plant tends to go dormant in summer, it is best interplanted with late-season bloomers to hide the dying foliage.

This plant performs well in both full sun and full shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. 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 species is not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets. It can be propagated by division.

Italian Arum is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. It is often used as a 'filler' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination, providing a mass of flowers and foliage against which the larger thriller plants stand out. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.