



**Aylett Nurseries**  
*The Complete Garden Centre*

# **Festive Houseplants**

## **Information Leaflet No.60**



*A guide to caring  
for Azaleas,  
Cyclamen  
& Poinsettia*



North Orbital Road (A414)  
St. Albans  
Hertfordshire  
AL2 1DH  
Tel: 01727 822255  
Fax: 01727 823024  
E-mail: [info@aylettnurseries.co.uk](mailto:info@aylettnurseries.co.uk)  
Web: [www.aylettnurseries.co.uk](http://www.aylettnurseries.co.uk)

# **Festive Houseplants**

***'A gift that grows!'***

## **Pages 3-4 - Azaleas**

A festive plant that provides colour and decoration during the holiday season and into the New Year.

## **Pages 5-6 - Home Grown Cyclamen**

One of the most popular of all winter flowering pot plants, they provide beautiful flowers on long stalks over decorative foliage. Available in a number of colours and home grown on our nursery!

## **Pages 7-8 - Home Grown Poinsettias**

Grown on our nursery these seasonal plants make a great gift! Available in many colours, whether it's the traditional red, simple white or striking orange you choose, these plants offer a splash of fantastic seasonal colour to your home.



## **Home Grown Plants = Zero Plant Miles**

Remember! Supporting your local grower means low plant miles and fresh healthy plants.

# Azalea Indicum

Originating from China this Azalea is now available in a vast range of colours. These plants do well on a north or east-facing windowsill.



**Light:** Plenty of diffused light but keep out of direct sun.

**Temperature:** Keep somewhere cool, the ideal temperature is 10°C to 13°C (50-55°F).

**Humidity:** Stand pots on saucer's of wet pebbles (Hydroleuca) ensuring plants NEVER stand in water. Mist spraying will increase humidity, but care must be taken to avoid spraying the flowers.

**Watering:** AN AZALEA SHOULD NEVER DRY OUT. Water plentifully – the best method is to plunge the pot into a bucket of rainwater (Azaleas hate hard limey water) leaving it until the bubbles stop (about 10 minutes). Allow to drain before placing back on it's saucer.

**Feeding:** Feed with an ericaceous feed such as Miracle-Gro Ericaceous Plant Food and Maxicrop Seaweed plus Sequestrene Iron. This will also help to reduce alkalinity if rainwater is not available.

Feed weekly when flower buds form in early Autumn until spring then reduce to fortnightly and stop feeding in late summer.

**Ayletts Tip!** If your Azalea is watered properly there should be a dark patch on the stem about 1cm in length just above the compost.

**Care after Flowering:** As flowers fade remove them carefully together with their stalks. When flowering has finished move to a cool but frost-free room, continue watering plentifully. Remove any soft shoots which appear, leaving only those which grow after mid April. Once danger of frost has past, plunge pot into a shady position in the garden border, REMEMBERING to keep well watered and fed. The plant will grow in summer and start to develop buds which will flower in winter/spring.

Bring indoors late September, placing in a cool, well lit position. If the air is too dry, leaves and buds will drop. Temperature should only be increased when the buds begin to swell.

**Re-potting:** Azaleas should be transferred into a pot one size larger every two to three years as necessary, using an ericaceous compost. This should be done after flowering has finished but prior to moving outdoors.

# Cyclamen Persicum



This popular winter flowering pot plant comes in a wide range of colours. It does best on a North facing windowsill in a cool room. Also happy in a porch.

**Light:** Bright light but shade from the direct sun.

**Temperature:** Cyclamen prefer cool conditions at all times, between 10–16°C (50 – 60°F).

**Watering:** Always water from below but do not allow pot to stand in water for longer than 10-15 minutes. Keep just moist, but allow surface to dry between waterings.

**Feeding:** Once a fortnight when growing and flowering, with a high potash feed such as a tomato fertiliser or Phostrogen plant tablets.

Remove dead flowers as they fade, making sure the whole stem is removed by twisting and pulling sharply. Any yellowed or damaged leaves should also be removed in this way.

**Aftercare:** When your Cyclamen has finished flowering and no new buds are forming, reduce the watering and feeding until the leaves start to yellow (usually around June), then cut out watering completely and store the

corms in their pot until early autumn when new shoots appear.

You should now remove the corm and shake off the dry compost and re-pot in the same pot with a fresh soil based mixture (John Innes No.2 is ideal). Stand the pot in a bright cool position and water SPARINGLY until the new leaves are well developed.

## **SPECIAL POINTS**

**Short Flowering Period:** Being in a warm room shortens the life of flowers, although incorrect watering and dry air may contribute. Generally, the cooler the room the longer the plant will flower. Unfortunately, at this time of year it's probably the room you use the least! Feeding regularly during the growing season will also help.

**Yellowing:** This can be caused by a number of reasons, but if the crown remains firm and healthy, the most probable cause is hot, dry air. Cyclamen don't like temperatures above 15°C (60°F). Move the plant to a cooler position. Other possible causes are over watering or direct sunlight. Allow the surface to dry between waterings, and ensure the light is diffuse.

**Over watering:** The crown of the plant becomes soft and rotten and the leaves droop. Never let water stand on the fleshy crown. Water from below, standing in a tray for no longer than 10-15 minutes and then let it drain.



# Poinsettia (Euphorbia Pulcherrima)



This popular 'Christmas Flower' was originally discovered in Mexico in 1834 growing as a large shrub. Today's varieties are more suited to a home environment, and come in a variety of colours, from bright red through to creamy white.

**Light:** Good light position but no mid-day sun.

**Temperature:** Average room temperature when in flower. No higher than 21°C (70°F) and no lower than 12°C (55°F).

**Water:** Water moderately, allowing the compost top to dry before re-watering. Do not stand in water.

**Feeding:** Feed fortnightly with a high potash feed while growing and flowering.

**Humidity:** They like a humid atmosphere. Stand pot on a saucer of moist Hydroleca, ensuring the pot NEVER stands in water.

## HOW TO MAKE A POINSETTIA BLOOM AGAIN NEXT CHRISTMAS

Cut back the stems in spring to leave 4" high stumps, the compost should be kept almost dry. In early May water

and re-pot the plant, removing some of the old compost. Continue to water and shoots will soon appear. Feed regularly with houseplant fertiliser, and remove some of the new growth, leaving 4 or 5 strong new stems.

From the end of September careful light control is essential. Cover with a black polythene bag from early evening and remove next morning so that the plant is in total darkness for 14 hours. Continue daily for 8 weeks, then treat normally. Your Poinsettia will bloom again at Christmas time, but it will be taller than the plant you bought.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Euphorbia pulcherrima the Latin name of Poinsettia means 'Most Beautiful' but TAKE CARE WHEN HANDLING OR REMOVING DAMAGED LEAVES AS THE SAP CAN IRRITATE.

Keep away from draughts or gas fire fumes.

**This leaflet is available in  
alternative formats**

Please ask a member of staff or  
Tel: 01727 822255  
Email: [info@aylettnurseries.co.uk](mailto:info@aylettnurseries.co.uk)

**December 2016**