

Green Dragon

Arisaema dracontium
(L.) Schott

The green dragon is an unusual plant in the arum family, Araceae. It is native to the eastern United States and Canada. It sends up only one leaf per year. Each leaf has multiple lobes, ranging on normal plants from 7 to 19. It has an unusual flower, typical of the family, with a spathe and a spadix, but narrower than most with a long tip. The spathe is a narrow spike with an elongated tip, while the spadix, which bears the flowers and which is enclosed within the spathe, which is a wraparound structure of leafy origin. The green dragon can grow four feet tall or taller.

The plant grows from a corm, which is completely renewed each year. It is hardy through zone 4.



Note: all parts of this plant contain a crystalline substance that can cause a burning sensation and dangerous swelling if ingested unprocessed. If the plant is cooked or thoroughly dried, this substance is not present.

Cultivation

The green dragon is a plant of moist to moderate soils, and will not do well in dry soil. It is highly shade-tolerant but can become very large given enough sun. It does not tolerate spring droughts well.

Propagation

Green dragon seed benefits from cold stratification. This can be accomplished by direct sowing of the seed in fall or early winter, or by cold storage in a moist medium. If the latter method is used, allow 60 days of stratification, alternating at least twice between freezer and refrigerator.

Conservation Seed
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