

Parrot Leaf

Native to Central and South America, this is a very low, fast-growing and easy-to-grow tropical groundcover plant for certain situations in the Arriyadh region. In a garden setting with ample irrigation, the plant adds a spot of striking colour, especially if the red-leaved varieties are chosen. This is a compact, herbaceous perennial, planted for its crisped and corrugated leaves which, according to variety, may be a stunning green or red in colour. The small, pale flowers are quite insignificant, although they are in bloom all year. Relatively frost-tolerant, it is propagated from cuttings, 2 to 5 cm in length. These root quickly and are best planted in organically rich, consistently moist, but not too wet, well-drained soils in full sun, or in partial shade. Alternatively, seed can be sown as soon as ripe. As a perennial, the plants can also be divided in spring. Maintenance includes pinching stems or moderate shearing to keep the plants compact and bushy. *A. ficoidea* is susceptible to nematodes and mealybugs, and often becomes very patchy; spider mites should be hosed off with water and fusarium wilt is combated by reducing water and removing infected plants. Useful for edgings and carpet-bedding in beds, borders, containers, or under trees and shrubs, it can also be grown as a cool-season annual in hot climates. Good in a formal garden or for seasonal interest. Plant 10 to 25 cm apart for groundcover effect. It will need replacing after a very hard frost. If desired, feed twice weekly with a balanced soluble fertiliser.



GENERAL

Origin	: tropical
Vigour	: normal growth rate
Humidity	: semi-arid, semi-humid, very humid
Propagation	: cuttings
Maintenance	: moderate

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: vulnerable
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (2500 ppm)
Hardiness	: 0°C

SHAPE

Type	: perennial
Height	: 0.1 m
Spread	: 0.2 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: white
Size	: 1 cm
Period	: August - August

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: capsule
Fruit size	: 0.2 cm
Toxicity	: edible when processed