



Emerald Goddess Gardens

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Botanical Name	Graptophyllum pictum 'Chocolate'
Common Name	Chocolate Caricature Plant or Jamaican Croton
Mature Size	1 ½ to 6 feet, depending on climate.
Bloom Color	Tubular rose pink
Bloom Period	Warm Season
Boom Form	Spike lined with tubular flowers
Light	Best in light shade
Water	Moderate
USDA Zone	9, 10, 11
Fragrance	No
Uses	Shade garden accent, background bedding, mixed perennials, potted porch, patio, indoor
Special Features	Interesting, colorful foliage, pretty flower
Grower Notes	Requires minimal basic care.



Graptophyllum pictum or Caricature Plant is a colorful, interesting, fast growing soft stemmed, tropical perennial. There are a number of different cultivars, but the classic and most popular is this one with chocolate bronze foliage that has an interesting creamy, pale pink, variegation that makes a striking contrast against the dark leaves. The common name of Caricature comes from the interesting pictures that can be imagined when contemplating the pattern of the variegation. It is also commonly called Jamaican Croton.

In the tropical landscape, the **Chocolate Caricature Plant** makes a wonderful addition or background in mixed beds, as it will reach a mature height of around 6 feet fairly quickly, and requires little more than the most basic care. In colder zones it can be grown as an annual, a seasonal potted plant, or permanent houseplant.

The best placement for the Caricature is in very light shade. However it can be grown in full sun, but has high water requirements in that setting.

Direct planting of 4 inch starter size plants is not recommended, so for the best results with your new plant, we recommend it be re-potted and allowed to grow larger before setting out in the landscape within the recommended USDA Zone range.

When the new pot has filled with roots and the plant is larger, then here a few hints for successful growing in the landscape. can be grown as a potted plant indefinitely.

- Plant in fertile well draining, slightly acidic soil. Amend with high quality organic material as needed.
- Locate in very lightly dappled shade, or cool direct light.
- Provide supplemental irrigation.
- Feed a good quality, slow release, fertilize with the initial planting. Very little fertilize will be required once the Caricature Plant is well established.
- Prune lightly and often when young to encourage branching and then as needed to control size and legginess.
- Protect from frost and freeze.
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For quick answers to your growing or planting questions, just email us at emeraldgoddessgardens@gmail.com

If you don't know your USDA Planting Zone, you can check the map on our website site at emeraldgoddessgardens.com

Care of Your New Plant

Here are a few basic guidelines for handling and caring for your new plant:

Direct planting of 4 inch starter size plants or plugs directly into the landscape is not recommended, with a few exceptions. So, for the best results with your new plant we suggest that it be repotted into a larger pot and allowed to grow larger until the new pot is filled with roots before setting out.

Check the recommended USDA Zone Range for the plant. Many gardeners are able to successfully grow plants outside their recommended Zones, but this is dependent upon providing the type of environment and care the plant needs.

- Immediately re-pot the new plant into a 6 inch to 10 inch diameter pot (a 6 inch pot is the recommended size for starter plugs) that can drain easily and thoroughly.
- Use a good quality commercial potting media.
- Apply a high quality, slow release plant food according to the label directions. Do not use hot, all chemical fertilizers like 6-6-6 or 10-10-10.
- Locate so that the plant can receive direct, full spectrum light for several hours daily, but is protected from hot, direct afternoon sun.
- Maintain consistent and uniform moisture in the soil. Take care not to over water.
- Packing crystals may be reused to conserve water, but do so with caution as they hold 6000 times their weight in water.
- If reusing the crystals, mix and incorporate them thoroughly throughout the potting media.
- Be sure the pot can drain and that the bottom of the pot does not sit submerged in water for more than a few hours.
- Supplement feed with a water soluble plant food every 2-3 weeks according to the label directions.
- Prune or pinch lightly and often when the plant is young and actively growing to strengthen the central stalk and encourage branching and build uniform shape.
- Monitor for signs of disease or insects and treat accordingly.
- Protect from frost and freeze, as even cold tolerant plants can be damaged by cold, and tropicals will perform better, flower earlier, and live longer within their Zone Range when protected from cold temperatures.

Many tropical and subtropical plants can be grown as potted plants indefinitely, and can be successfully wintered over indoors in colder climates, so long as they are moved indoors well ahead of temps into the 30°F's, are maintained in warm environment (minimum 40°F) with adequate, full spectrum light, consistent soil moisture is maintained, and any pest or disease issue are promptly and properly addressed.

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