

# 2023 Top Tropical Plants for Interiorscape & Summer Annual Plantings



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## Who Am I?

- ▶ Head Grower @ Gabriella Plants
- ▶ B.S. Horticulture & Agribusiness
- ▶ Interned Walt Disney World Horticulture Dept.
- ▶ Technical Degree: Greenhouse Management, Landscape Design & Floriculture



## *Colocasia esculenta* ROYAL HAWAIIAN® 'Waikiki'

- ▶ Family: *Araceae*
- ▶ 2023 All-America Selections Ornamental Variety Award Winner
- ▶ USDA Zone 7b-11



Brand New plant for 2023!

The FIRST & Only Colocasia to win All-America Selections (AAS) Ornamental Variety Award- 2023

All AAS Winners are trialed throughout North America by professional, independent, volunteer judges who grow new, never-before-sold entries next to comparisons that are considered best-in-class. Only those entries that have superior garden performance, better than the comparisons, are granted the AAS award designation.

Family: *Araceae*

Breeder: John J. Cho, Ph.D. Emeritus Plant Pathologist, University of Hawaii, Plant Breeder of the entire Royal Hawaiian Colocasia Collection. Includes: 'Aloha', 'Black Coral', 'Blue Hawaii', 'Diamond Head', 'Hawaiian Punch', 'Kona Coffee', 'Maui Gold', 'Maui Sunrise', 'Tropical Storm' & 'White Lava'

Entire Collection have been bred to be happy in full sun, and great container specimens. Disease resistant and tidy clumping habit.

'Waikiki' features deep-green glossy foliage with creamy white centers, vivid pink veins & deep burgundy petioles.

Develops coloration earlier than 'White Lava', at 4-5 leaves.

USDA Zone 7b-11. Can withstand colder if corms are protected and buried by mulch to overwinter.

36" maximum height at maturity allows for center focal placement in plantings without overwhelming or outgrowing a container.

Will grow best in higher light settings and kept consistently moist.

## *Philodendron* 'Summer Glory'

- ▶ Family: *Araceae*
- ▶ Hybrid between unnamed Bob McColley hybrid & *Philodendron gloriosum*
- ▶ Hardy to 34° F



Newest *Philodendron* cultivar to be released via Tissue Culture! Gabriella Plants became one of the select companies to receive the first batches of these via tissue culture and this Early release began mid-2022 and Summer Glory is now readily available as a finished plant.

Family: *Araceae*

*Philodendron* 'Summer Glory' is the product of a controlled cross made by the Breeder Lariann Garner in August 2016 between an unnamed Bob McColley *Philodendron* hybrid as the egg donor (female parent) and a *Philodendron gloriosum* as the pollen donor (male parent). 'Summer Glory' was selected as a single unique plant from amongst all the progeny derived from this cross.

'Summer Glory' was then first introduced into the asexual tissue-culture process in August of 2020. This in-vitro meristem tip culture of Summer Glory has shown that the unique features of the new cultivar are stable and reproduced true-to-type in successive generations.

*Philodendron* 'Summer Glory' is distinguished as a new and distinct variety of

Philodendron due to the following combinations of characteristics:

Unique reddish bronze colored foliage on young leaves. Foliage that turns a dark, shiny green as foliage matures. Striking red cataphylls surrounding emerging leaves. Durability and relative freedom from pests.

Mother plant has a compact “self-heading” growth habit & pollen donor  
Philodendron gloriosum has a terrestrial, creeping growth habit. ‘Summer Glory’ has a compact, creeping growth habit but with the ability to climb, just with short internodal spacing.

Can tolerate down to near freezing temperatures (34 degrees F)

Will grow best in bright light to shaded conditions and allowed to dry slightly between waterings.

## *Ficus elastica* 'Shivereana'

- ▶ Family: *Moraceae*
- ▶ Newest *Ficus* cultivar to hit the market
- ▶ Hardy to around 50° F



Newest *Ficus* cultivar to be released via Tissue Culture! Through Gabriella Plants an Early release began late-2022 and 'Shivereana' is now readily available as a finished plant.

Family: *Moraceae*

I was first made aware of this striking *Ficus elastica* cultivar in late 2019 under the name 'Schrijveriana' but it did not seem to be in cultivation privately or commercially anywhere within the United States that I could find at that time.

After speaking with a grower in Canada who possessed a specimen in their private collection, I gained insight that Schrijveriana was a Scandinavian name and had actually been around since at least the 60's and originated from the Netherlands/Scandinavian part of the world.

By late 2021 plants being grown and propagated from cuttings were hitting the US market through individual sellers and were fetching thousands of dollars for unrooted single-node cuttings!

With *Ficus elastica* cultivars such as 'Burgundy', 'Robusta', 'Tineke', 'Ruby' and 'Melany' being very popular in the houseplant trade, multiple tissue culture companies began the process of producing this cultivar under the Americanized name of 'Shivereana'

Being a *Ficus elastica* cultivar, 'Shivereana' is an upright growing plant which possesses the ability to be a large-growing, arboreal plant, reaching true tree-like size with correct tropical conditions and ample time.

USDA Zones 10-11 tolerating temperatures down to around 50 degrees F.

Will grow best and develop deeper variegation in higher light settings and can be kept consistently moist in a well-draining substrate or allowed to dry slightly between waterings in a standard substrate.



## *Begonia brevirimosa subsp. exotica*

- ▶ Family: *Begoniaceae*
- ▶ Species epithet *brevirimosa* translates to mean “with short cracks”
- ▶ Hardy to mid 40 °F



One of the newest Begonias to be released via Tissue Culture! Tissue culture ex-vitro plant release began late-2022 and *Begonia brevirimosa subsp. exotica* is now beginning to be available as a finished plant for 2023.

Family: *Begoniaceae*

*Begonia brevirimosa subsp. exotica* is a naturally occurring form, not a cultivated hybrid, native to the rainforests of the island of New Guinea.

Before it was officially named, it was grown under the name *Begonia brevirimosa* “Edenburgh”.

Plant Taxonomy Lesson: species epithet *brevirimosa* translates to mean “with short cracks”

Shrub-like growth habit reaching around 3’ tall before arching over. Can attain taller height if staked and supported. Leaves can get large, 8-12” long.

Being a true rainforest plant, care can be tricky if correct conditions are not met.

*Begonia brevirimosa* subsp. *exotica* enjoys warmth (60-85 degrees F) but does not like excessive heat. Will not tolerate humidity below 40%, with higher humidity levels being preferred.

Bright/filtered light is best but cannot withstand direct sun. Leaves will develop more vibrant pink in brighter light with higher temperatures and humidity, while cooler darker conditions will promote more green.

Reportedly can tolerate temperatures in the 40s but would expect the plant to defoliate back to mature/woody stem tissue.

## *Philodendron billietiae*

- ▶ Family: *Araceae*
- ▶ *Philodendron* species discovered by Frieda Billiet in 1981
- ▶ Hardy to around 55 °F



*Philodendron* species discovered by Frieda Billiet in 1981 in lowland tropical rainforest of French Guiana.

Family: *Araceae*

Native to French Guiana, Guyana and Northern Brazil where it grows as a hemi-epiphyte.

Plant was officially described in 1995 by Dr. Tom Croat and was given the species epithet *billietiae* in honor of Frieda Billiet who discovered it and was the former Curator of Living Collections at Meise Botanic Garden in Belgium.

*Philodendron billietiae* has been available commercially since the mid 2000's through private collectors producing plants via cuttings. Prices ranged from a few hundred to thousands of dollars per plant.

As of mid-2022 *Philodendron billietiae* is now being produced in the US via tissue culture with the expectation that popularity will continue to rise as availability increases and overall price per plant decreases.

This plant possesses bright orange stems and petioles with long, lobed green leaves that can reach lengths of over 3'.

In optimal conditions once mature *Philodendron billietiae* will grow and produce extrafloral nectaries.

This plant will grow best in Bright/filtered light and dry slightly between waterings.

Being a lowland tropical rainforest native, optimal growth is achieved in temperatures between 65-80 degrees F & humidity levels higher than 40%.

Hardy down to around 55 degrees F.

## *Philodendron billietiae* 'Variegata'

- ▶ Family: *Araceae*
- ▶ One of the most sought-after plants for any serious Plant Collector
- ▶ Hardy to around 55 °F



The Variegated form of the species *Philodendron billietiae* appeared on the market via overseas growers early 2020.

Available at the time only through importing, individual plants were fetching tens of thousands of dollars. By 2021 private collectors in the US had very limited supply of plants produced from cuttings available for thousands of dollars.

This was one of the most-sought after plants (and to many still is) for any serious Aroid Collector. Deemed a “Holy Grail” plant.

Now in 2023 US supply is still very limited, with prices from \$1,000-\$3,500 for plants with just a few leaves. These plants are still primarily being produced via cuttings, aiding in the still-limited scarcity of the rarity.

Tissue culture plants are finally beginning to appear, with each ex-vitro plantlet still reaching prices \$750+.

It is expected throughout 2023 for *Philodendron billietiae* 'Variegata' to become more widely cultivated due to Tissue Culture plants slowly becoming available, which

will allow the price per plant to decrease overall.

## *Apoballis acuminatissima* 'Lavallaei'

- ▶ Family: *Araceae*
- ▶ Species epithet *acuminatissima* translates to mean “with a very long, narrow and pointed tip”
- ▶ Hardy to around 60 °F



*Apoballis acuminatissima* 'Lavallaei' is a cultivated form of the species native to the island of Sumatra.

Gabriella Plants became one of the select companies to receive the first batches of these via tissue culture and their release began early-2022 and *Apoballis acuminatissima* 'Lavallaei' is now readily available as a finished plant.

Family: *Araceae*

It was once believed to be a species of *Schismatoglottis* but in 2010 was separated out and recognized as a new genus!

Plant Taxonomy Lesson: species epithet *acuminatissima* translates to mean “with a very long, narrow and pointed tip”

It naturally grows as a geophyte (terrestrial plant) in the wet tropical rainforests so optimal growth is achieved in temperatures between 65-80 degrees F & humidity levels higher than 40%.

This plant will grow best in Bright/filtered light to shady conditions and can be kept consistently moist in a well-draining substrate or allowed to dry slightly between waterings in a standard substrate.

Will reach heights of 18-24" tall and has a clumping growth habit.

Hardy down to around 60 degrees F.



## Philodendron 'Ruckus'

- ▶ Family: *Araceae*
- ▶ First Philodendron hybrid to be created by Brett through the Breeding Program at Gabriella Plants
- ▶ Potentially Hardy to 55° F



First Philodendron hybrid to be created by Brett through the Breeding Program at Gabriella Plants! These were first released on February 24<sup>th</sup> 2023.

Family: *Araceae*

Philodendron 'Ruckus' is the First of Its Kind- a hybrid of *Philodendron stenolobum* [egg donor/female parent] x *Philodendron corcovadense* [pollen donor/male parent].

Every Plant Has A Story: At 1am on April 16th, pollen was collected from a mature *Philodendron corcovadense* and was manually applied to a pollen receptive inflorescence of a mature *Philodendron stenolobum*.

On June 30th, the infructescence bearing the ripe berries bursting with seeds was collected and sowed.

Since these are seedlings they are each unique individuals, expressing slightly different characteristics from both of their parents. With every new leaf they continue to grow into their final mature form.

We expect them to develop long leaves like *stenolobum* but keep the thick leaf, veining, and triangular lobe shape of *corcovadense*.

They also gained the *corcovadense* trait of being tolerant and grow best in higher light/full sun conditions.

These were once considered to be part of the genus *Thaumatophyllum* but that genus is no longer recognized and they are back to being part of the *Philodendron* subgenus *Meconostigma*.

Potentially hardy down to 55 degrees F.

# Q&A Time!

Thank you to everyone at Metro Hort for allowing me to offer my insight into the 2023 Plant Market trends

*Thank You*