

Clivia

The genus *Clivia* (klive-ee-ah) is a group of strap leaved plants in the Amaryllidaceae family. They are native to South Africa and were first imported to England as an unknown novelty in the early 1800's. The genus is named after Lady Charlotte Florentia Clive, duchess of Northumberland, in whose conservatory the first imported specimen bloomed, resulting in the genus being named after her.

Clivias are easy care house plants. Their deep green leaves and brilliant flower umbels require very little maintenance. They are one plant that seems to thrive on neglect, growing well even with inconsistent watering. Of course, watering consistently (perhaps once a week) will benefit the plants. Clivias prefer placement in a shaded location. Bright sun will cause bleaching of the leaves.

In order to flower, Clivias need a period of cool evening temperatures. We suggest moving your Clivias to a shaded porch or other shaded outdoor area for about eight weeks in the fall before temperatures drop below freezing (September - October). They will not tolerate frost or freezing, so be sure to move them indoors before the season changes. The plants usually flower some time between mid-February and early April. The length of bloom is approximately three weeks.

Clivias are excellent houseplants since they do not require direct sun. Their tolerance of long periods of drought makes them a good choice for people who travel often. The wide leaves need to be dusted occasionally or wiped down to restore their glossy sheen.