Amorphophallus napalensis

Growing Tips – Please refer to the catalogue or website for general information. Please inspect the tuber on arrival and if you are in any way dissatisfied please let us know in writing within 2 days of receipt. Amorphophallus napalensis is best grown as a greenhouse or conservatory plant under light shade. As a potted plant it may be stood outside in a shady position in Summer but it is not suitable for a permanent position outdoors in the UK.

Spring – Overwintered tubers need not be potted up until late March. Pot them into fresh compost each year and adjust the pot size accordingly. Use a good quality potting compost and add 10% grit to promote drainage. Incorporate 3 to 5 grams slow release fertiliser per litre of compost. Alternatively, liquid feed. Use a high-nitrogen fertiliser. The top of the tuber should be 5-10 cm below the compost surface. The pot size should be about 3 times the diameter of the tuber. Water the tuber in but keep the plant on the dry side until the leaf has emerged, perhaps as late as May. The lead emerges mainly utilising the stored reserves of the tuber, so the plants do not immediately need a great deal of water. If the tuber is flowering the inflorescence will merge in spring, develop and die off completely before the leaf emerges later the same year. Sometimes the tuber resumes dormancy after flowering (see additional notes). Tubers need little or no water during flowering; the inflorescence develops mainly from stored food reserves. The tuber will shrink considerably during flowering and the plant may need to be settled in again afterwards. The inflorescence is fascinating, but foul-smelling. If you do not want the plant to flower, remove the inflorescence before it opens, as soon as its basal stalk is apparent. After potting, keep the tuber in a frost-free greenhouse or conservatory. Additional heat will encourage early development of the inflorescence and/or leaf but is not essential for A. Napalensis.

Summer – If slow-release fertiliser has not been incorporated in the compost begin liquid feeding as soon as the leaf has emerged. Plants can be fed more or less at each watering. Heavy feeding will not change the size of the current season's leaf but will result in a larger tuber so that next season's leaf will be correspondingly larger. Water freely but ensure excess water drains freely. Lightly shade plants to prevent leaf scorch. Plants can be stood outside in the summer under light shade but A. Napalensis is probably best treated as a greenhouse or conservatory plant.

Autumn – The leaf will naturally decline in early autumn and when it starts to yellow stop watering. The leaf naturally loses turgidity and eventually collapses so do not try watering more frequently to compensate as this may result in rotting of the tuber. It is best to allow the leaf to remain on the plant for as long as possible so that food reserves pass down into the tuber. The compost should be completely dry by the time the leaf has detached. Grown under protection it is usually not necessary to provide supplementary heat in autumn in order to ripen the tuber of A. Napalensis.

Winter – Turn out the pot after drying it off. You will find that the A. Napalensis tuber produce elongated outgrowths that eventually separate off as daughter tuberlets. These can be left to separate off naturally or, if required to propagate plant, can be cut off and potted independently in the spring. Store dried tubers frost-free (~5°C) in the dried-off compost. Inspect tubers periodically through the winter. Small patches of rot should be excavated using the end of a plant label and the cleaned surface allowed to dry off before returning the tuber to storage in the compost.

Pests, diseases and other problems – Amorphophallus are relatively trouble free. Slugs and snails seem not to trouble the plants. Two-spotted (red) spider mite may be a problem in a greenhouse if the humidity is too low. If you know you are a subject to spider mite try to maintain a high humidity in the greenhouse by regular „damping down“ and periodic misting of the plants, especially the undersides of the leaves. To control spider mite, use a
predator, *Phytoseiulus persimilis*. This should be available from your local garden centre but if not do contact us. Please note that there are no suitable chemicals to control spider mite.