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hoya



Photo courtesy of Hermann Engelmann Greenhouses, Inc.

H. carnosa 'Rubra'
Wax plant

BOTANICAL NAME

Hoya spp. (HOY-a)

COMMON NAMES

Wax plant, Wax vine, Wax flower, Porcelain flower, Honey plant

DESCRIPTION

Though these plants also bear flowers, *Hoyas*' waxy and fleshy leaves, which grow 2 to 4 inches long, and vining stems make them great foliage plants. Several hundred species of *Hoyas* exist, but *H. carnosa* (wax plant) is among the most common, as is *H.*

bella (miniature wax plant). *H. carnosa*'s stems can reach 15 feet in length and are best trained on trellises, wires or stakes. Other species work well in hanging baskets. Clusters of fragrant, waxy, star-shaped flowers may bloom between May and September.

DECORATIVE LIFE

Indoors, with proper care, the plants can last for years.

AVAILABILITY

Wax plants are available year-round.

in-store and consumer care

LIGHT Bright, indirect light is good for these plants, and a few hours of direct sunlight each day is even better.

WATER Keep the plants evenly moist in spring through fall, and reduce watering in winter.

TEMPERATURE Average indoor temperatures of 70 F or higher are ideal. A cooler night temperature in winter will help promote flowering.

HUMIDITY Mist the leaves regularly except when the plants are blooming. If possible, move the plants outdoors during the summer months.

FERTILIZER Feed the plants every two weeks in spring and summer.

PROPAGATION *Hoyas* can be propagated through stem or leaf cuttings taken from mature shoots.

challenges

PESTS Watch for such insects as scale or mealybugs. These can be treated by swabbing the leaves with rubbing alcohol or a diluted soap solution. These pests may be a sign that the plants are too warm during the winter months.

LEAF PROBLEMS Falling leaves may be a sign the roots are waterlogged.

IMPORTANT DON'TS Don't move the plants once buds appear, or they may fall off. When the flowers die, don't remove the spurs or stubs because new flowers will grow from them.



Photo courtesy of The John Henry Company

H. carnosa 'Exotica'
Wax plant

fun facts

WHAT'S IN A NAME *Hoyas* are named for Thomas Hoy, who served as gardener to the Duke of Northumberland, in England, in the late 1700s.

FAMILY Wax plants are members of the *Asclepiadaceae* (milkweed) family. Common relatives include milkweed (*Asclepias*) and *Stephanotis*.

HOME SWEET HOME *Hoyas* are native to Asia and Australia.

SEEING RED An internal circadian rhythm controls the production of *H. carnosa*'s sweet flower fragrance, which occurs only at night. **sfr**

Some information provided by:
Botanica, by R.G. Turner Jr. and Ernie Wasson
Chain of Life Network®, www.chainoflifenetWORK.org
Hermann Engelmann Greenhouses, Inc.
www.exoticangel.com
The Houseplant Encyclopedia
by Ingrid Jantra and Ursula Kruger
The House Plant Expert, by Dr. D.G. Hessayon

Reach "Foliage Plant of the Month" writer Amy Bauer at abauer@superfloralretailing.com.



Photo courtesy of Hermann Engelmann Greenhouses, Inc.

H. curtisii 'Stripes'



Photo courtesy of Hermann Engelmann Greenhouses, Inc.

H. linearis