

Blandfordia species

Blandfordia grandiflora

Blandfordia punicea

Plants can be grown from seed and usually take three years to flower. Older plants can be divided to obtain new plants. Plants have also been tissue cultured, but so far this approach has not produced the advantages sought of vigour nor evenness of growth.

Growth in the seedling stage is slow, and 4-5 months will pass while the seedlings reach 5-6cm tall.

Perhaps the reason why nature provides such prolific seeding of Blandfordia is the slow and hazardous establishment process which the plant must confront in nature. Blandfordia seedlings are slow growing with little ability to adjust or to correct their posture. But they are extremely tenacious so a plant, poorly established with bent roots and one or more leaves buried, may not prosper, but will not die. It could still be there, 6cm high after several years when its siblings are flowering. Added to this is the enormous variability of seed-grown plants. Even after good, equal care some plants will remain small while others will leap forward.

Seedlings can be picked out from the germination trays once they have reached 6-7cm height. Or if necessary, they can remain for as long as a year and still become good plants. As with some other species, transplanting invigorates Blandfordia plants in a way which is not understood but taking them out and clean-rooting them and replanting can stimulate them.

MAINTENANCE

Watering and weed control require attention. Older plants need less frequent watering, but the species has a considerable need for water, especially during budding and flowering. Through the summer daily watering is required, but in the winter the need is less. Weeds can become a problem. Blandfordia does not compete well and can be choked out.

HABITAT

Some shade has been recognised as necessary for Blandfordia to do well in a mono-culture state but too much shade gives paler flowers as well as providing for excessively moist conditions with the disadvantages already discussed. Flowers are also protected against birds and strong winds.

Blandfordia Potting Mix

25% composted pinebark fines

25% peatmoss or 25% composted hardwood sawdust

50% washed river sand