

Hooded Dwarf Elephant's Ear



Hooded Dwarf Elephant's Ear

Alocasia cucullata

Height: 3 feet

Spread: 3 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Chinese Taro, Buddah's Hand

Description:

This small variety produces attractive heart shaped leaves with thick veining on the undersides, curly tips and upturned leaf margins; eventually forms a nice thick clump, fast growing but doesn't get to large; quite cold hardy as well

Ornamental Features

Hooded Dwarf Elephant's Ear's attractive small glossy heart-shaped leaves remain dark green in color throughout the year on a plant with an upright spreading habit of growth. It features solitary conical bluish-green hooded flowers rising above the foliage in mid summer.

Landscape Attributes

Hooded Dwarf Elephant's Ear is an open herbaceous annual with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and usually looks its best without pruning, although it will tolerate pruning. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Hooded Dwarf Elephant's Ear is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Hooded Dwarf Elephant's Ear will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 3 feet. Although it's not a true annual, this plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.



Hooded Dwarf Elephant's Ear foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It is quite adaptable, preferring to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets.

Hooded Dwarf Elephant's Ear is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.