

## *Iresine diffusa f. herbstii*

This plant in the amaranth family -- with its glossy, bright red, green, white to variegated leaves -- rarely blooms in cultivation and is grown for its showy foliage. It can be grown as both an annual and as a houseplant.

In the garden, this plant requires moist though well-drained soil and full sun for the best color. It grows 12- to 18-in. tall and 12- to 36-in. wide. Pinching back is recommended to maintain shape and to promote bushier foliage, and removing buds concentrates the plant's energy in producing its colorful foliage.

'Brilliantissima' features purplish-red leaves with pink veins. 'Aureoreticulata' features green leaves with yellow veins.

### Common names:

Beefsteak, Bloodleaf, Chicken Gizzard, Formosa Bloodleaf, Yellow Bloodleaf

### Phonetic Spelling

ir-es-EYE-nee dih-FEW-sa HERB-stee-eye



Generally grown as an annual in cooler climates, *Iresine herbstii* can be brought indoors in the winter and grown as a houseplant in a soil-based loamy potting mix. As a houseplant, it needs warm temperatures and bright indoor light with morning sun, but it needs some protection from direct afternoon summer sun. If a plant becomes leggy, it is not getting enough light. Keep soils consistently moist in the growing season, but reduce moisture from fall to late winter. Pruning can maintain a height of 12- to 18-in. tall and plants grown indoors may be taken outdoors in summer. Cuttings easily root in water to produce new plants each year.

This low-maintenance plant has no serious insect or disease problems, but it is susceptible to powdery mildew. Watch for aphids and spider mites.



UPPER RIGHT: *Green leaves Forest and Kim Starr* [CC BY 2.0](#). LOWER RIGHT: *Leaves ekenitr* [CC BY-NC 2.0](#)

By Kathryn Copley, Extension Master Gardener<sup>SM</sup> Volunteer, Brunswick County, NC. For more information on gardening in Brunswick County, please call the Brunswick County Cooperative Extension Office, 910.253.2610.

### SOURCES:

[Iresine diffusa f. herbstii \(Beefsteak, Bloodleaf, Chicken Gizzard, Chicken-Gizzard, Formosa Bloodleaf, Joseph's Coat, Yellow Bloodleaf\) | North Carolina Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox](#)

<https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/PlantFinder/PlantFinderDetails.aspx?taxonid=275665>