



# kalanchoe



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Photo courtesy of The John Henry Company

*Kalanchoe blossfeldiana*  
Flaming Katy

## in-store and consumer care

**LIGHT** Indoors, *Kalanchoes* require bright light, including some exposure to direct sun (which can cause the plants' leaves to turn reddish). Outdoors, these plants need filtered sunlight.

**WATER** Because of *Kalanchoes*' succulent nature, the soil should be kept on the dry side: Drench the soil thoroughly, then allow the surface to become dry before watering again.

**TEMPERATURE** Indoors, *Kalanchoes* prefer moderate temperatures—60 F to 75 F. Outdoors, they can tolerate temperatures from 50 F to 90 F, depending on season.

**HUMIDITY** These plants do not require high humidity levels; do not mist them.

**FERTILIZER** Feed *Kalanchoes* with an all-purpose houseplant fertilizer every two to four weeks while they're in bloom and/or from May through September.

**GROOMING** Snip off bloom-bearing stems after the flowers fade.

**REPOTTING** Repot every year in late spring/early summer (June-July).

**REBLOOMING** Before *Kalanchoes* will form new flower buds, they must be kept in com-

### BOTANICAL NAME

*Kalanchoe blossfeldiana*  
(kal-an-KO-ee blos-feld-ee-AH-na)  
(also ka-LAN-ko-ee and ka-LAN-cho)

### COMMON NAMES

Flaming Katy, Flaming Katie,  
Flaming Kathy/Cathy  
(also Madagascar widow's-thrill,  
Kalekana and Brilliant star)

### DESCRIPTION

*Kalanchoes* are compact shrublike plants, with branching clusters of tiny tubular four-petaled flowers atop stems that grow as long as 12 inches and rise out of a dense base of thick waxy dark-green leaves.

### COLORS

Hues include pink, hot pink, red, red-orange, orange, salmon, coral, yellow, lavender, purple and white.

### DECORATIVE LIFE

Longevity varies by cultivar and is dependent on environment and care. Bloom cycles last from two to six (or more) weeks, but plants typically can live and rebloom for two or three years (see "Reblooming").

### AVAILABILITY

*Kalanchoes* are available year-round; however, they were originally introduced as winter flowering plants, available from December through February.

plete darkness for 14 to 16 hours every day for at least two weeks (and as long as two months)—preferably beginning in early fall. The plants can receive moderate light for only eight to 10 hours each day during this period.

## challenges

**ETHYLENE SENSITIVITY** *Kalanchoes* are sensitive to ethylene gas, but the degree of sensitivity varies by cultivar. Exposure to ethylene can cause blooms to fade, dry out or fail to open and foliage to turn yellow or fall off. Keep these plants away from sources of ethylene (fruit, cigarette smoke, automobile exhaust), and make sure they are treated with an ethylene inhibitor at the grower level or during transportation.

**PESTS** Aphids, mites, scale and mealybugs can become problems. The first three can be eradicated with insecticidal soap if the infestations are caught early on; mealybugs can be removed with cotton swabs dipped in rubbing alcohol.

**DISEASES** Gray mold (*Botrytis*) can develop if plants are kept too wet and too cool.

**FADED BLOOM COLORS/YELLOW LEAVES** These maladies are generally the result of insufficient exposure to sunlight or exposure to ethylene gas.

## fun facts

**WHAT'S IN A NAME** The genus name *Kalanchoe* has Chinese derivations; hence, its four syllable pronunciation. The specific epithet *blossfeldiana* was given in honor of Robert Blossfeld, a German hybridizer who, in around 1932, introduced the plant in Potsdam from its native Madagascar.

**FAMILY** *Kalanchoe* is a member of the *Crassulaceae* (orpine) family. Relatives include jade plant (*Crassula*), hen-and-chickens (*Echeveria*), stonecrop (*Sedum*) and houseleek (*Sempervivum*).

**HOME SWEET HOME** *K. blossfeldiana* is native to the African island of Madagascar. The plant was discovered there in 1927 by French botanist Perrier de la Bâthie. **sfr**

Some information provided by:  
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