



protea, leucadendron, leucospermum



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Protea



Leucadendron
'Red Eye'—Conebush



Leucospermum cordifolium
'High Gold'—Pincushion

BOTANICAL NAMES

Protea spp. (pro-TEE-ah)

Leucadendron spp. (loo-ka-DEN-dron)

Leucospermum spp. (loo-koh-SPUR-mum)

COMMON NAMES

Protea spp.: King *Protea*, Queen *Protea*, Prince *Protea*, Princess *Protea*, Duchess *Protea*, Jester *Protea*, Mink *Protea*, Ray-flowered *Protea*, Spoon *Protea*, Sugarbush *Protea*

Leucadendron spp.: Conebush, Silver balls, Silver tree, Spinning top

Leucospermum spp.: Pincushion, Pin-cushion flower

DESCRIPTION

Proteas have numerous flowers in cone- or dome-shaped heads that are surrounded by stiff, colorful bracts. They are available in hues of red, white, pink,

fuchsia, green and bicolors.

Leucadendrons grow as showy trees and shrubs. Like *Proteas*, they have stiff, colorful bracts that surround conelike flower heads. They are available in hues of red, burgundy, green, yellow and bicolors.

Leucospermums look like pincushions filled with pins. Their colors include red, orange, yellow and bicolors.

CONSUMER LIFE

Each bloom cycle will last for several weeks. The plants may bloom several times a year with proper care and favorable conditions. The plants can survive for years, depending on the environment.

AVAILABILITY

Some varieties are available year-round, but supplies will vary. Order in advance to ensure availability.

in-store and consumer care

LIGHT Bright, indirect light is best for plants displayed indoors. Full sun is tolerated outdoors. The best flowering will be exhibited on plants grown in full sun.

WATER Water the plants well, and allow them to dry between watering. Avoid irregular watering, overhead watering and standing water on the foliage and flowers. Overwatering can cause root or crown rot.

TEMPERATURE Warm areas (65 F to 75 F) are best for displaying these plants.

HUMIDITY Moderate humidity is best.

FERTILIZER The plants shouldn't need fertilizer. If you do use fertilizer, do not apply

one that has phosphorous or ammonium nitrates. Small amounts of ammonium sulphate dissolved in water is a better choice.

SOIL These plants thrive in well-drained, sandy potting mixes. Soil that contains decomposed granite is ideal.

GROOMING Remove faded flowers and leaves. These plants naturally stay fairly compact and neat.

challenges

PESTS These plants are relatively insect-free. Watch for red spider mites on indoor plants and aphids on new growth. Both usually can be controlled by a simple wash of the plants.

fun facts

WHAT'S IN A NAME Carl Linnaeus, the famous Swedish botanist, named *Proteas* after the Greek sea god Proteus, who had the ability to assume many different forms, in reference to the genus' diversity of flowers and foliage.

"*Leucadendron*" comes from the Greek words "*leukos*" for "white" and "*dendron*" for "tree," referring to the silvery-colored foliage on some species.

"*Leucospermum*" comes from the Greek "*leukos*" for "white" and "*sperma*" for "seed."

FAMILY *Proteas*, *Leucadendrons* and *Leucospermums* are members of the *Proteaceae* family. Relatives include *Banksias* and *Grevillea* (spider flower, silky oak). There are more than 1,400 naturally occurring species of this plant family.

HOME SWEET HOME *Proteas*, *Leucadendrons* and *Leucospermums* are native to South Africa. Today, they are commercially grown in Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Portugal and the United States. **sf**

Photo courtesy of Nurserymen's Exchange, Inc.



Some information provided by:

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California Protea Association, www.californiaprotea.com
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