

Landscape Evaluation of Temperate *Arisaema*®

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INTRODUCTION

For several years now, I have been growing and observing various specimens of *Arisaema* in both my own garden, as well as in the landscapes and perennial borders of clients. I have compiled a list of selected species, based on my qualitative observations, cultural requirements, and propagation methods. My summation follows.

CULTURE CONDITIONS

Plants belonging to the genus *Arisaema*, have long been popular with gardeners. Here in the upper Midwest of the U.S.A. *A. triphyllum*, jack in the pulpit, and *A. dracontium*, the green dragon, are the best known members of the genus. They both inhabit garden and woodland here. Other members of this genus have quite spectacular spathe and spadix, the flowering structure, which merit the attention of both the propagator and the gardener.

Most of the plants listed are probably hardy in U.S.D.A. Zone 5 conditions here in the greater Chicagoland area. While generally considered plants inhabiting locations under woodland canopy, many of these species will do well in a partially sunny garden location. Indeed, many will tolerate exposure early in the day, with the afternoon preferably being spent shaded.

With regards to cultural care, soil amendment can influence success with various plants. Where needed, clay soils were amended with either pumice, composted bark, perlite, or a combination of these products. This was facilitated to allow for soil drainage, promote beneficial organisms, and help with overwintering in what can be soggy soils here in this Zone 5 area.

PROPAGATION

Propagation was either carried out by sowing seeds, when available, or by division of tubers. Seeds were sown into Growing Systems® groove tube trays. Standard soilless medium is used throughout the production process. After rooting through the trays, plants are then transferred to Anderson Die & Manufacturing® Band Pots. After the plants matured in the Bandpots, they are either moved into larger nursery cans, or directly planted into landscape projects.

SELECTED SPECIES GROWN

Below is a listing of the various *Arisaema* that I have been growing for between 3 and 7 years. These plants are worthwhile additions to either your own garden or the gardens of your clients.

***Arisaema amurense*.** Flower spathe is green with a green spadix; leaves are 10–14 inches tall. It has started to produce offsets.

Arisaema candidissimum. Flower spathe has a pink tone with pale venation; leaves can be up to 20–24 inches across. This species will produce offsets. It is perhaps the choicest specimen.

Arisaema consanguineum. Flower spathe is green or purple, or combination of the colors with light stripes. Can grow up to over 3 ft. Specimens here are not that tall yet.

Arisaema dracontium. Flower is pale green to perhaps white. Pedate leaves are produced giving the plant a dramatic appearance in the border.

Arisaema fargesii. Flower is purple to perhaps wine color with white or a combination of colors. It has larger leaves much like to *A. candidissimum*.

Arisaema flavum. Yellow to yellow-brown flowers, with interior hood color in purple hues. Leaves are deeply divided and up to 1 foot in height.

Arisaema triphyllum. This species has ubiquitous green “jack in the pulpit flower” with many geographic variations. Leaves range from dark green to almost ink colored. They can produce offsets to form distinctive groupings in the border.