

Bird of Paradise

Strelitzia reginae or *Bird of Paradise* is a tropical plant from southern Africa with bold, tropical leaves. They are adaptable to a wide range of home conditions.

Light:

Best in bright indirect light. Bird of Paradise can tolerate direct sun when indoors if temperatures are not too high (80F+); avoid direct sun if placed outdoors. BoP can tolerate lower light levels but growth will be slower and it probably will not bloom.

The large, broad leaves benefit from occasional dusting or wiping with a soft, damp cloth.

Water & Fertilizer:

Your goal is to maintain a fairly even moisture level, not soggy and not parched. Water when the top few inches of the soil is dry, adding enough water that some comes out of the drainage holes. When fully drained through, empty any accumulated water from the saucer to avoid the pot sitting in water.

Accumulation of chemicals (salts, chlorine, fluoride and minerals) can cause leaf edges to brown and burn. To avoid this, use filtered water, or water with tap water that has been let sit for 24+ hours to allow chemicals to dissipate. Occasionally bringing your BoP into a bathtub and flushing the soil with clear filtered water, then letting it drain thoroughly can rinse some salts out of the soil.

Yellowing leaves can indicate that your BoP has been too dry or too wet. Both can cause root damage/reduce water uptake.

Fertilize monthly to 2x monthly in spring and summer. Do not fertilize in winter.

Temperature & Humidity:

Normal home temperatures between 65F-80F. BoP prefers higher humidity, misting can be beneficial. You can also place the pot on a pebble tray.

(continued)



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Strelitzia lack
natural insect
pollinators. They
are pollinated by
sunbirds in the
wild.



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Bird of Paradise cont.

Repotting:

Don't repot too frequently-roots need to be snug to encourage blooming, and root disturbance/repotting shock can delay flowering by years. Repot only if absolutely necessary. This may mean tucking the original nursery pot into an attractive cachepot rather than potting directly.

If repotting is needed, any commercial potting soil will work.

Pests:

Spidermites and mealybugs can be a problem. Wiping the leaves regularly can minimize pests, along with keeping leaves dust-free.

Bird of Paradise plants must be at least 3 to 5 years old before they are mature enough to bloom. Adequate light, moisture, and fertilizer are also necessary to encourage blooming. However, blooming in an average home environment is unusual.

The broad leaves will often split naturally, this is normal.

