

BUCHANAN'S

NATIVE PLANTS

Caring For Tillandsias (Air Plants)

Tillandsias are fascinating plants because of their ability to draw from their soilless environments all they need to survive. They are often called *air plants* because of their propensity to attach themselves to branches and trunks of trees, rocks, etc. They belong to an order of plants called *epiphytes*, and ever since their discovery in the mid-nineteenth century, they have been widely sought after and collected by plant enthusiasts the world over. Key factors for keeping your tillandsias healthy and happy are light, water and air circulation.

Light

Tillandsias like bright but filtered light late spring through the fall. Later in the fall through very early spring they can and like to withstand direct light. Exposure to direct summer sun will sunburn and ultimately kill your tillandsia.

Water

Water thoroughly 2-3 times per week in the hottest, driest times of year, and 1-2 times in more humid times or conditions. Do not use distilled water! Tap water, filtered tap water, pond, aquarium or rain water are the best choices. They may also be misted if they appear a little dry, but this should not be their sole source of water. Every month or so, they can be immersed completely in water for 20 minutes then removed to dry. Do not keep them constantly wet or moist.

Air Circulation

Tillandsias as a rule like enough air circulation to have them dried out within 4 hours after being thoroughly watered or immersed in water.

Tillandsias may be hung suspended from decorative wires, string, or they may be attached with a non-water-soluble glue such as hot glue (after it cools a tiny bit), E-6000 Adhesive or Liquid Nails to coral, rocks, driftwood, manzanita branches, crystals, or seashells. Heavy or larger plants can be wired on until the adhesive dries and holds them securely. ***Never use Superglue or copper wires*** to attach. These will kill the plants.