

Air plant care by Rosmarus Enviro

I hope you like your gift air plant. It is a *Tillandsia ionantha rubra* cv. Red.

It originates from a tropical climate where it gets its moisture from the air. In our dry climate, you will have to assist in in the future for it to thrive. Air plants have little fuzzy grey/white hairs on their leaves, which they use to absorb nutrients from the air.

How do you care for your air plant?

To keep it happy and healthy:

- Spray your air plant regularly with water/ soak your air plant in water.
- Place your air plant in a bright spot, but not in direct sunlight as it will damage the leaves.
- Protect your air plant from frosts at all times (just don't put it outside unless it is warm weather).

Air plant treatment

During summer, spray your air plant a few times a week and less frequent during the colder, darker months. The best water is rainwater as it is pure and free of chemicals and calcium carbonate. For your plant to really love you, spray your air plant with an air plant fertilizer. Never leave your plant wet. After it has been sprayed or soaked it is very important that it is allowed to dry so it does not collect water in the centre – or it will rot.

When you spray the plant, spray both sides and then shake off excess water and allow to dry upside down. In addition to regular spraying, soaking the air plants monthly is very much recommended.



Soaking method

To make your air plants even happier, I recommend that you soak it every two weeks or so in a bowl with lukewarm water (rainwater is significantly better than tap water as they do not tolerate chlorine). Microwave the bowl of water lightly, check that it slightly above room temperature (don't boil it!!) then place the plant upside down in the bowl for 60-120 minutes of soaking. When the spa treatment is over, shake it lightly upside down and place the air plant upside down on a towel to run off. It is very important that it dries completely and no water collects between the leaves.

Here is an example below:



Soak for 60-120 minutes, then dry off completely



Place with friends away from direct sunlight.

Eventually it will flower! After it has flowered it will slowly die, but before then it will produce little babies (pups) along the base. Do not pull these off until the mother plant has died completely. You will then have several new plants to enjoy.

Good luck!!