

Over-wintering Streptocarpus plants



As the days start to lengthen the young leaves at the centre of the plant will start to grow. The old leaves may well die off and can be removed. As the plants grow gradually increase the water and start to feed them once again.

Winter treatment of your Streptocarpus plants (other than the Crystal varieties)

As we get into November, you will find your plants gradually stop flowering, though you may still get the odd flower. Remove the flowering stalks at their bases where they join the leaf. Try not to leave lengths of stalk as they go wooden looking and are rather ugly.

You may find the ends of the leaves start to look rather tatty. Do not worry about this, as it is quite normal. You can break the dead ends of the leaves off, it will do no harm.

Sometimes quite a distinct line forms across the leaf, an abscission layer, and the lower part stays green and healthy while the upper part goes yellow and dies off.

You will need to keep the plants in a bright situation, during the winter you can give them as much light as possible. A south-facing windowsill will be fine if they are indoors. If they are in a greenhouse or conservatory then they must have enough warmth to keep them frost-free.

Stop feeding the plants. Be very sparing with the water, especially if they are in a cool situation. Give just enough water to prevent wilting, do not keep the compost soggy wet or the plants will soon rot.



Winter treatment of your Crystal varieties

Provided conditions are right, these will continue to flower profusely through the winter. They will need a very bright situation and a temperature at least 10°C (50°F). Again be careful with the watering. Continue to give a weak feed of high potash fertiliser. If using our feed tablets a half tablet once a month should be sufficient.

As I write [November 2005], we have hundreds of Crystal Streptocarpus smothered in flowers and still full of buds. They are truly amazing.