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12335

Drachenbaum

Dragon Tree

Dracaena Draco

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The evergreen Dragon Tree with its sword shaped leaves has on its mostly thick trunk a Yucca-like crown that branches out over time, until there are many smaller treetops coming together as one main crown. Its name stems from the dark red resin ("Dragon Blood") that comes out of its wounds. During the Middle Ages the "Dragon Blood" was considered more precious than gold due to its healing effects on injuries and broken bones. The industrial use as wood preservative and the fact that cutting the tree was much easier than tap into it, resulted in the Dragon Tree being defined as vulnerable (VU) by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species. The oldest tree of its kind, "El drago", with at least 350 years, is found in the small town of Jcod de los Vinos in Tenerife. The resilient Dragon Tree doesn't need a lot of water, can also be kept in darker spots and can easily be cultivated as a tub plant.

Natural location: It's natural habitat includes the Canary Islands, the Cape Verde Islands, Madeira and North Africa.

Cultivation: Seed propagation indoors is possible throughout the year. To increase the germinability, you should place the seeds for 24 hours in warm water for priming. Then plant the seeds about 1 cm deep in moist potting compost and cover the seed container with clear film to prevent the earth from drying out. Don't forget to make some holes in the clear film and take it every second or third day completely off for about 2 hours. That way you avoid mold formation on your potting compost. Place the seed container somewhere bright and warm with a temperature between 20°C and 25° Celsius and keep the earth moist, but not wet. The germination usually starts after four to five weeks. Avoid full sunlight after proliferation. About eight weeks after germination you may plant the seedlings carefully in a pot or tub without damaging the young roots.

Place: The Dragon Tree is best kept in a full sunny to semi-shaded place. It can even be cultivated in a darker spot, where it will grow more slowly. Between spring and autumn you can also keep your tree outdoors.

Care: The Dragon Tree likes consistent moisture without waterlogging, but it can also resist dry periods. Between April and October it is advisable to give fertilizer for tub plants every two weeks. The trunk of the tree can be cut back to the desired height – preferably during spring. It will slowly and steadily sprout again.

During the winter: Even though older Dragon Trees can resist a short cold period, during winter it is best to be kept in a bright spot with a temperature not less than 8° Celsius. Now you can give less water and spray the plant from time to time with lime-deficient water to prevent spider mite infestation.