

Ixora is a medium-sized, tropical flowering evergreen shrub that is used in landscapes from central to south Florida. For the most part, plants have glossy, green leaves which are arranged oppositely along each stem. Size of leaves and shade of green is determined according to species, and cultivar. All ixoras produce clusters of star-shaped flowers on stem tips or terminal growth. These flowers may vary in color from red to orange to yellow and pink, again according to species, cultivar. There are over 400 species of ixora, most of which are native to southern Asia and China. Of those, only a few are grown as landscape plants.

One species which is grown is *Ixora chinensis* or Chinese Ixora. This species offers many cultivars, many of which produce yellow to orange flowers. 'Singapore Yellow' is one cultivar that is commonly available. Flowers are yellow-orange in color and leaves are bright to dark green. Flowering occurs throughout the year and maximum height is approximately 4 ft. Another species grown is *Ixora duffi*. This species is larger growing with large green leaves and orange-red flowers. 'SuperKing' is one cultivar commonly available. Flowers are orange-red and showy in large clusters and maximum height may reach 6-8 ft. Flowering may also occur throughout the year. *Ixora coccinea* or Red Ixora is a popular species that had orange-red flowers and reddish new growth. Individual shrubs may reach 5-6 feet in overall height.

The ixora hybrids, which are crosses between species, account for the majority of ixoras which are used in landscapes. One popular hybrid is the 'Nora Grant' which produces clusters of pink flowers throughout the year. Leaves are light to bright green and large in size. Maximum height may reach 4 ft. or more. 'Maui' has orange-red flowers with compact growth to about 3 or 4 ft. in height. Leaves are smaller in size than most other hybrids.

The 'Petites' or dwarf ixoras have tiny leaves and extremely compact growth. These seldom reach over 3 feet in maximum height. Flower colors range from red, yellow and pink. All ixoras are considered tropical and should be used in hedges or as accent plants in areas that are protected from frost and freezing temperatures. In addition, ixoras need plenty of sunlight for proper growth and flowering as well as a rich organic soil with an acid pH. Salt tolerance is considered moderate. Dwarf pink has the lowest cold tolerance.

PLANTING

Best growth can be expected if plants are set in a rich, but well-drained soil with an acid pH. Sandy soil should be improved by the addition of **Rockledge Gardens' Planting Mix**. Mix **Espoma Bio-tone Starter** to the mix for strong healthy root growth. Plants should be placed in the ground at soil level and an organic mulch should be applied 2 or 3 inches thick around the entire root area. Water newly planted shrubs thoroughly every day for the first week. For the next two to four weeks at the rate of two to three thorough waterings per week.

FERTILIZING

Ixoras should be fertilized 3 times during the growing season, in March, June, and September. Use **Espoma Holly-tone** and apply 1/2 cup per plant, distribute lightly over the entire root zone.

PLANT PROBLEMS

Scale Insects- Sucking-type insects that remove plant juices from leaves and stems, weakening plants. Solution- Spray with **Organicide** or **All Season Oil Spray** according to the proper application rate as specified on the label.

Iron Chlorosis- Leaves turn light green to yellow with veins remaining dark green.

Solution- Spray with **Miracid** Water Soluble Fertilizer directly onto the leaves according to the proper application rate as specified on the label.



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