

Cyclamen

Cyclamen are members of the Primrose family, often seen in fall and winter with spectacular colors like white, rose, red and shades of pink, sometimes even ruffled or two-toned. They grow from neat clumps and have blossoms that look like shooting stars. At this time of year we see them in all the nurseries. They are charming in decorative pots and baskets decorated for the holidays. Cyclamen make great companions in potted plants whether inside or out.

Size: Average 12” depending on variety.

Exposure: Shade or partial shade.

How to Plant: Florist varieties partially out of the soil. Regular varieties plant normally.

Water needs: regular watering but do not soak.

Soil: Cyclamen grow best in porous soil rich in humus and organic matter.

Fertilization: Regular fertilizing with mild fertilizer.

Snapshot: Normally we see two types on the market, larger florist types and smaller hardier garden varieties. The florist variety can be grown in milder climates, but the garden variety will do better situated under camellias, in rock gardens or in a more sheltered situation. However, most cyclamens don't like frost so take care to bring them inside if necessary. If you receive a florist cyclamen as a gift this holiday season, remember to plant the upper half of the tuber out of the soil. They are beautiful whether indoors or out, so give them a try. For more information check out the Cyclamen Society at <http://www.cyclamen.org>

Novella Springer

Calaveras Master Gardener

San Andreas