

# *Philodendron bipennifolium* Horsehead Philodendron<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

Large, 18-inch-long, shiny, olive green, leathery leaves in the shape of a violin or a horse's head distinguish this vining philodendron (Fig. 1). Whether growing up tree trunks or potted totem poles, fiddleleaf philodendron provides neat, evergreen, glossy foliage with a tropical appeal. The stems are an attractive light brown with long tendrils.

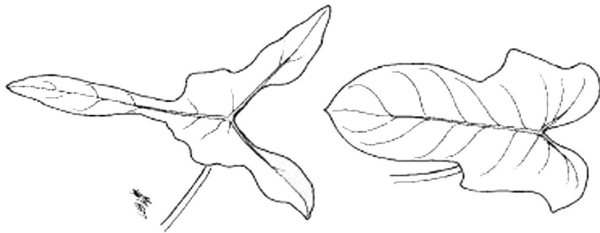


Figure 1. Horsehead philodendron

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Philodendron bipennifolium*

**Pronunciation:** fill-loe-DEN-drun  
bi-pen-niff-FOLE-lee-um

**Common name(s):** horsehead philodendron, fiddleleaf philodendron

**Family:** *Araceae*

**Plant type:** herbaceous

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10B through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** suitable for growing indoors; cascading down a wall; hanging basket

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**Height:** depends upon supporting structure

**Spread:** depends upon supporting structure

**Plant habit:** spreading

**Plant density:** open

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** coarse

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** undulate

**Leaf shape:** deltoid

**Leaf venation:** palmate

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 12 to 18 inches

1. This document is FPS470, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date October 1999. Reviewed February 2014. Visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no fall color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** green  
**Flower characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch  
**Fruit cover:** fleshy  
**Fruit color:** unknown  
**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not applicable  
**Current year stem/twig color:** gray/silver  
**Current year stem/twig thickness:** very thick

## Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in the shade  
**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; acidic; loam  
**Drought tolerance:** moderate  
**Soil salt tolerances:** poor  
**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

## Other

**Roots:** not applicable  
**Winter interest:** no special winter interest  
**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential:** aggressive, spreading plant  
**Pest resistance:** very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect plant health or aesthetics

## Use and Management

Growing well in bright light or deep shade, fiddleleaf philodendron needs well-drained soil to avoid root rot. The plant is slightly salt tolerant.

Propagation is by cuttings or layering.

## Pests and Diseases

Mites, scale, thrips, and mealy bugs are all known to bother fiddleleaf philodendron.

Bacterial soft rot and several leaf spotting diseases can cause problems for fiddleleaf philodendron.