

Aechmea fasciata: Silver Vase¹

Edward F. Gilman, Ryan W. Klein, and Gail Hansen²

Introduction

The attractive silver-grey, banded foliage of this easy-care bromeliad is a perfect background for the brilliant, springtime flower stalk which emerges from the tight center rosette of leaves. The flower stalk is composed of a cluster of rosy pink bracts in which nestle pale blue flowers that change to deep rose. It is the long-lasting pink bracts which are most noticeable.



Figure 1. Full form—*Aechmea fasciata*: silver vase.
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Leaf—*Aechmea fasciata*: silver vase.
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Figure 3. Flower—*Aechmea fasciata*: silver vase.
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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor; Ryan W. Klein, graduate assistant; and Gail Hansen, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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General Information

Scientific name: *Aechmea fasciata*

Pronunciation: eek-MEE-uh fass-ee-AY-tuh

Common name(s): Silver Vase

Family: Bromeliaceae

Plant type: perennial; herbaceous

USDA hardiness zones: 10B through 11 (Figure 4)

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Uses: mass planting; container or above-ground planter; ground cover; suitable for growing indoors

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range



Figure 4. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Description

Height: 1 to 3 feet

Spread: 1 to 2 feet

Plant habit: vase shaped

Plant density: open

Growth rate: slow

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: basal rosette

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: spiny

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: parallel

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 18 to 36 inches

Leaf color: blue or blue-green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: pink; salmon

Flower characteristic: spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: no fruit

Fruit length: no fruit

Fruit cover: no fruit

Fruit color: not applicable

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: usually with one stem/trunk

Current year stem/twig color: not applicable

Current year stem/twig thickness: not applicable

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: acidic; alkaline; clay; sand; loam

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerance: poor

Plant spacing: 18 to 24 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Growing best in partial shade in moisture-retentive but well-drained soil, Silver Vase makes a handsome ground cover or container plant. Place individual plants about 18 to 24 inches apart for an effective ground cover. A ground cover or mass planting of Silver Vase in front of a green-foliaged shrub grouping which branches to the ground make a nice, bright accent for a partially shaded spot. It can also be successfully grown epiphytically, or without soil, with moss around its roots and wired to the branches of rough-barked trees where its cupped rosette will catch needed water.

Propagation is by division of the offsets or by seed.

Problems include scale and mosquitoes which may breed in the trapped water in the leaves.

Design Considerations

The bold form and coarse texture of the bromeliad make it perfect for containers and highly visible spaces in the landscape. Use with plants that are softer with small foliage and mounding or spreading forms. Dark green foliage in the companion plants will highlight the silver-green and light pink of the bromeliad. Pair with plants that have more texture in the foliage to contrast with the smooth stiff leaves of the bromeliad. Use plants with foliage only, or plants with small to medium flowers with cool bright colors, such as purples and blues, to contrast with the soft pink of the bromeliad flower. Use large masses of companion plants around the base or in front of the bromeliads when they are planted in a mass.

Pests and Diseases

Root rot is a problem if the soil is kept too moist.