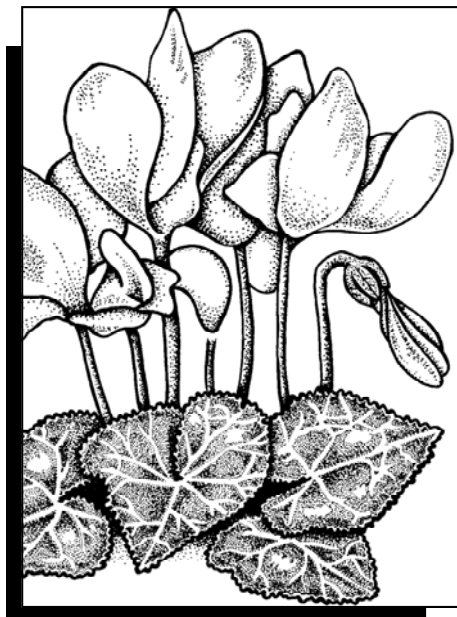




Cyclamen

Cyclamen are tuberous rooted perennials in their native habitat. They are grown for their beautiful flowers that resemble shooting stars. Cyclamen are native to the Middle East, Cypress and Crete. They have a common name of "Sow Bread" because pigs eat the big roots. The tubers contain 'Cyclamen' which is poisonous when ingested but this doesn't affect the pigs. In people, even small quantities can cause gastritis and nervous tension. The toxicity is destroyed by roasting. In ancient times the tubers were roasted, beaten and made into small cakes. Eating this is said to make one feel amorous and fall in love easily. Much of the folklore about Cyclamen refers to love and conception. The power of the plant was considered so great that it was dangerous for a woman who was pregnant to even step on a plant. There are many other powers believed to be held by Cyclamen including: healing snake bites, warding off witch's spells and influencing the affairs of the heart! The essence of Cyclamen brings good luck.

Cyclamen persicum is the wild ancestor of the florist Cyclamen. The name Cyclamen comes from 'kuklos'



meaning circle. It is thought to have gotten this name from the spiraling of the seed capsule stem to the ground. The original species has pale to deep pink or white 2" fragrant flowers on 6" stems. Selective breeding has given us large flowers but lost the fragrance on some varieties. Improvements, however, have returned this fragrance to some varieties and to our gardens

Blooming Time

Today's Cyclamen bloom in late Fall to Spring in many colors: crimson, red, rose, pink, salmon,

purples, white and bicolor. The flowers are usually large, uniform 3 to 4" borne on 6-8" stems above kidney shaped, dark green leaves. Some varieties have silvery marbling on the leaves. The plants have a firm, upright habit and are quite vigorous. The dwarf or mini Cyclamen are popular. Their 1/2 to 3/4 size makes them ideal for smaller gardens or for the windowsill.

Where to Plant

Plant outdoors in southern areas as a Fall and Winter bedding plant. Cyclamen are a good choice to replace Caladiums or Impatiens in shady, moist spots. They prefer rich, porous soil with lots of humus. Cyclamen are hardy to 20 degrees F. Plants will lose their leaves and go dormant in hot weather but may survive if drainage is good and soil is not waterlogged or too dry.

Fertilize Cyclamen every 3-4 weeks with blooming plant fertilizer.

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