



Left: Albo — most rare, coveted aroid Unicorn Plant! ("when you find one it is like finding a Unicorn!" Center: Scindapsis from Peru. Right: Philodendron selloum -- a common aroid / hardy to grow outside. Linda Gay photos

## AROIDS — LOW LIGHT PLANTS

**'The more fenestrations, the rarer the plant!'**

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This group of very low light plants thrives in South America rainforests and other tropical places makes wonderful indoor plants. Many are epiphytic (vine-like) and require support..

Devils' Ivy and split leaf Philodendron started the houseplant frenzy with their colorful foliage, very large leaves or leaves with holes (fenestrations). The more fenestrations the rarer the plant. Kind of like paying more for holey jeans!

All aroids have spathe-type flowers, like Spathiphyllum (closet plant (file photo right)). They are identified by flower and fruit. Others common ones are, below l to r, Chinese Evergreen (Aglaonema), Pothos (Epipremnum), Swiss Cheese Plant (Monstera), Amorphophallus (Corpse Flower) and Diffenbachia (Dumbcane). (File photos)



Aroids' calcium oxalate crystals (which look like little needles under a microscope) are inside leaves making them toxic to pets and humans if ingested. Curious, I cut a Dumbcane plant, touched my finger to the latex and put it on my tongue. Within a few seconds I could feel swelling in my throat — hence the name Dumbcane. It's doubtful animals would eat much as reaction is quick and animals have instincts we have lost.

I have repotted and propagated these plants without any incident to handling and have them growing all over my house. My two standard poodles do not even mess with them.