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**Elephant Ear**  
*Colocasia esculenta*

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 4 feet

Sunlight: ○ ●

Hardiness Zone: (annual)

Other Names: Cocoyam, Dasheen, Taro

**Description:**

Best grown in fertile, organically rich soil; in colder climates it can be removed after first frost and stored in a cool dry place until spring; huge foliage is stunning as a garden accent

**Ornamental Features**

Elephant Ear's attractive enormous heart-shaped leaves remain green in color throughout the season. It features subtle buttery yellow tubular flowers along the stems in mid summer. The fruit is not ornamentally significant.

**Landscape Attributes**

Elephant Ear is an open herbaceous annual with a shapely form and gracefully arching foliage. Its wonderfully bold, coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced garden composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should be cut back in late fall in preparation for winter. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Elephant Ear is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting



*Elephant Ear*  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



*Elephant Ear foliage*  
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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### **Planting & Growing**

Elephant Ear will grow to be about 4 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 4 feet. Although it's not a true annual, this fast-growing plant can be expected to behave as an annual in our climate if left outdoors over the winter, usually needing replacement the following year. As such, gardeners should take into consideration that it will perform differently than it would in its native habitat.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. It is quite adaptable, preferring to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division.

Elephant Ear is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.