

From Granny's Garden

Musa (Banana) is an evergreen perennial that likes full sun and rich moist loam but it must be well drained. This plant is not classed as a shrub as the stems are not woody but formed from overlapping leaves.

Musa is one of 3 genera in the family Musaceae. These include plantains as well as the Banana. There are approximately 70 species of Musa and I have no idea which mine is. Some of them show quite a bit of red in the leaves and veins but most of them, like mine, are green. In certain areas the plants will flower and form bananas but they have to be in a very sheltered space. Mine have never got that far.



Bananas cannot tolerate any frost. The leaves will die back but the roots go quite deep and usually come back up in the spring. I surround mine with wire netting in the fall, filling the inside with compost and raked up leaves. The plant suckers quite readily and before long you will have several growing up. These can be dug up quite easily and as long as they have a few roots on them and they can be moved to another area or a large pot. They look nice in pots and of course can be moved around but should be moved to a frost-free area in the winter. Keeping them in a pot also enables them to stay green all year but remember if you do have them inside, they grow quite fast and, before you know, you will have a 6 or 7-foot plant.

They can get spider mites, aphids, a variety of other insects as well as wilt and other fungal diseases that hit indoor plants.

You might well think why bother but I enjoy all the different leaves and colours from the different plants. The leaves of the Banana are huge, ranging up to 3 feet long. All the different leaves compliment each other and the Banana with its huge leaves helps to add interest and beauty to the home garden.

Granny (Cam MacKenzie)