

Aponogeton madagascarensis- The Madagascar Lace Plant

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Through literature and talking with other hobbyists I was under the impression that Lace Plants were hard to grow and harder to get plantlets from, a plant that was only supposedly for botanical gardens.

I ordered 3 bulbs from Arizona Aquatic Gardens. When they arrived I dropped them in a bare 20-gallon tank in order to soak them and get them to sprout. Two of them sprouted and one was squishy and smelled bad. I planted the one that looked more robust in my 50-gallon tank and gave the other to Aaron Glass to have a shot at.

Hard to grow or not I had many things in my favor such as light, CO2 and a fertile substrate. It grew and took up plenty of room in the 50 gallon. It flowered frequently, sometimes 2 at a time. Each flower stalk had 2 or more long purple floral spikes with many small flowers on it. I would use a small paintbrush to fertilize the flowers. This didn't seem necessary because they produced plantlets anyway. The hard part was keeping the floral stalk from drying out and dying. This would happen because the flower would float along the surface of the water right under the glass top and the hot lights right above. It helped if I dropped the water level down about an inch or two so the flower would float far enough away from the lights.

If all goes well little seed/plantlets form and mature. They'll fall off and settle on the bottom. When they settle they get worked down in the substrate a bit they send down roots and send up leaves.

Difficult yes, but not impossible. Good luck.