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Orange-Colored Plants for Hawai'i Landscapes

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This publication focuses on plants having orange as their key color. In the color wheel, orange is just next to red (see Wong 2006), and red is the compliment of green, which is the dominant color in landscapes because it is the color of most foliage. The plants selected for illustration here can create exciting variation when juxtaposed with green in landscapes of tropical and subtropical regions.

Many plants that can exist in a tropical or subtropical environment do not necessarily give a "tropical" feeling or theme. Examples, in my opinion, are plumerias, bougainvilleas, rainbow shower trees, ixoras, and hibiscuses.

Groups of plants that I believe provide more of a tropical look are palms, heliconias, gingers, bamboos, ferns, bromeliads, birds of paradise, tī, orchids, membwers of the Araceae and Marantacea families, certain aquatic plants, some tropical vines such as the passion flowers, and large ficus trees with aerial roots. Specific plants for this purpose include *Ficus pseudopalma*, *Ludovia lancifolia*, *Osmuxylon lineare*, *Piper magnificum*, and *Begonia nelumbifolia* (New Guinea impatiens). Monocotyledons in particular lend a primordial flavor. Orange fish or birds can also be used to add to the orange element.

Orange plants not illustrated that would also be desirable include *Guzmania monostachia*, *Heliconia bihai* 'Dwarf Aurea', *H. bihai* 'Orange Claw #2', *H. psittacorum* x *H. spathacircinata* 'Golden Torch', *H. stricta* 'Fat Bud' (rated low risk for invasiveness), and *Musa coccinea*.

The plants with orange coloration shown here are just a few of the possibilities. Their selection is based on my personal aesthetic preference and is intended to give you a start in developing your own list of plants to provide orange highlights to a landscape.

Before I introduce a new plant species into my garden or landscape, I want to know that it is not invasive in Hawai'i. Some plants have the ability to escape from their original planting area and spread into disturbed or natural areas. Invasive plant species can establish populations that survive without human help and can expand into nearby and in some cases even distant areas. These plants can outcompete native and agricultural species, causing negative impacts.

Luckily for plant enthusiasts in Hawai'i, scientists have developed a screening tool, the Hawaii-Pacific Weed Risk Assessment system (HPWRA), which can predict a plant species' potential to become invasive in Hawai'i or other Pacific Islands. The HPWRA system uses a series of 49 questions about a plant species' geographic origin, biology, ecology, undesirable traits, and pest status elsewhere to predict whether it has the potential to become invasive. Based on the score, the species is rated low risk, "evaluate" (needs more information), or high risk. Species rated high risk have characteristics that may allow them to cause economic or environmental harm to Hawai'i. Although using the HPWRA system is not legally binding, its use allows us to make planting decisions that

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assist in developing a sustainable Hawai‘i. Over 1,000 species have been assessed. If you are curious about the invasive potential of a plant, you can contact the Weed Risk Assessment Specialists at hpwra@yahoo.com and request an assessment or complete list of assessed species. You can also access the ratings at www.plantpono.org. Several of the species in this publication have been screened, and their rating is given by their name.

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Aechmea blanchetiana **(low risk)**

Areca vestiaria

***Clivia* species (kaffir lily)**

Bauhinia cumingiana

***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘Apple Juno’ tī**

***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘Dwarf John Cummins’ tī**

***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘Hongo Rust’ tī**

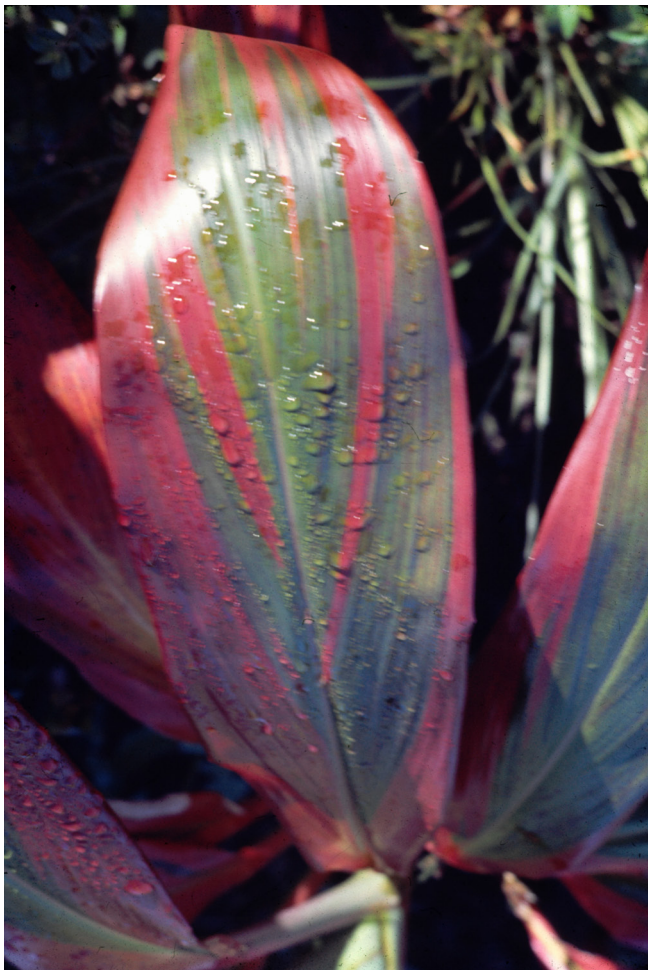
***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘Iwao Shimizu’ tī**

***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘No Name’ tī**

***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘Peter Buck’ tī**

***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘Pinou Salmon’ tī**

***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘Willi’s Gold’ tī**



***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘Schubertii’ tī**

***Cordyline fruticosa* ‘Sonny Mathews’ tī**

Costus productus

***Curcuma roscoeana* (Jewel of Burma)**

***Hedychium* hybrid 'Annie Bishop' ginger**

***Hedychium* species (glossy orange ginger)**

Heliconia aurantiaca

***Heliconia caribaea* x *H. bihai* ‘Jacquinii’**

***Heliconia champneiana* ‘Splash’**

Heliconia episcopalis

Heliconia nickerensis

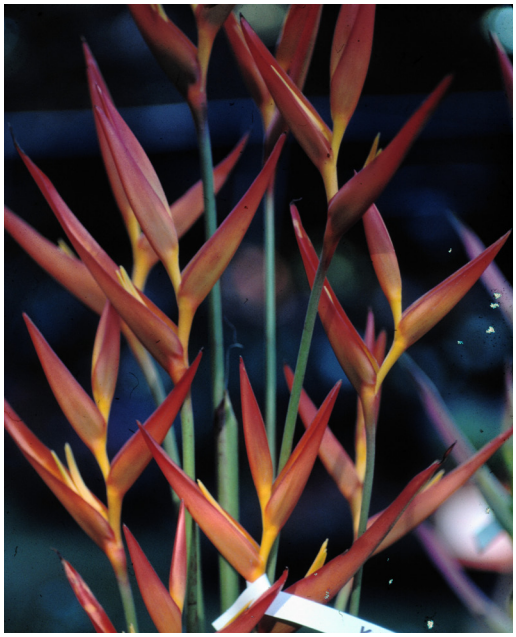
***Heliconia psittacorum* ‘Andromeda’**

***Heliconia psittacorum* ‘Petra’**

***Heliconia psittacorum* ‘St. Vincent Red’**

***Heliconia psittacorum* x *H. spathacircinata* ‘Guadaloupe’**

***Heliconia psittacorum* x *H. spathacircinata* ‘Tropic Fleur’**



***Heliconia psittacorum* x *H. spathacircinata* ‘Keanae Red’**

Hemerocallis aurantiaca **(common orange day lily)**

Pyrostegia vennusta **(huapala vine) (high risk)**

Strelitzia reginae **(bird of paradise) (low risk)**

***Zingiber zerumbet* (low risk)**

Orange carp