

# *Aechmea fasciata*: Silver Vase<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

The attractive silver-grey, banded foliage of this easy-care bromeliad is a perfect background for the brilliant, springtime flower stalk which emerges from the tight center rosette of leaves. The flower stalk is composed of a cluster of rosy pink bracts in which nestle pale blue flowers that change to deep rose. It is the long-lasting pink bracts which are most noticeable.



Figure 1. Full form—*Aechmea fasciata*: silver vase.  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Leaf—*Aechmea fasciata*: silver vase.  
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Figure 3. Flower—*Aechmea fasciata*: silver vase.  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

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## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Aechmea fasciata*

**Pronunciation:** eek-MEE-uh fass-ee-AY-tuh

**Common name(s):** Silver Vase

**Family:** Bromeliaceae

**Plant type:** perennial; herbaceous

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10B through 11 (Figure 4)

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Uses:** mass planting; container or above-ground planter; ground cover; suitable for growing indoors

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range



Figure 4. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**Height:** 1 to 3 feet

**Spread:** 1 to 2 feet

**Plant habit:** vase shaped

**Plant density:** open

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** coarse

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** basal rosette

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** spiny

**Leaf shape:** elliptic (oval)

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 18 to 36 inches

**Leaf color:** blue or blue-green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** pink; salmon

**Flower characteristic:** spring flowering

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** no fruit

**Fruit length:** no fruit

**Fruit cover:** no fruit

**Fruit color:** not applicable

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** usually with one stem/trunk

**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** not applicable

## Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun

**Soil tolerances:** acidic; alkaline; clay; sand; loam

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Soil salt tolerance:** poor

**Plant spacing:** 18 to 24 inches

## Other

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding

**Pest resistance:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

## Use and Management

Growing best in partial shade in moisture-retentive but well-drained soil, Silver Vase makes a handsome ground cover or container plant. Place individual plants about 18 to 24 inches apart for an effective ground cover. A ground cover or mass planting of Silver Vase in front of a green-foliaged shrub grouping which branches to the ground make a nice, bright accent for a partially shaded spot. It can also be successfully grown epiphytically, or without soil, with moss around its roots and wired to the branches of rough-barked trees where its cupped rosette will catch needed water.

Propagation is by division of the offsets or by seed.

Problems include scale and mosquitoes which may breed in the trapped water in the leaves.

## Design Considerations

The bold form and coarse texture of the bromeliad make it perfect for containers and highly visible spaces in the landscape. Use with plants that are softer with small foliage and mounding or spreading forms. Dark green foliage in the companion plants will highlight the silver-green and light pink of the bromeliad. Pair with plants that have more texture in the foliage to contrast with the smooth stiff leaves of the bromeliad. Use plants with foliage only, or plants with small to medium flowers with cool bright colors, such as purples and blues, to contrast with the soft pink of the bromeliad flower. Use large masses of companion plants around the base or in front of the bromeliads when they are planted in a mass.

## Pests and Diseases

Root rot is a problem if the soil is kept too moist.