

Aloinopsis

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Schwantes first described Aloinopsis in 1926. They are members of family Aizoaceae, the mesembs, and closely related to genera Deilanthus, Ihlenfeldtia, Nananthus, Prepodesma, Tanquana, and Titanopsis. Controversy still swirls over exactly which name to put on which species, but this doesn't matter to the hobbyist; go ahead and call them all Aloinopsis. Most come from the Karoo and Little Karoo regions of South Africa.

They are small plants with tuberous or swollen roots and rough leaves in rosettes. Most are somewhat to extremely cold hardy and bloom in the winter. The flowers are mostly yellow to pink, fragrant, and open in the afternoon, closing after dark.

They experience rain at any season, but most rain falls during their summer, and winter months are the driest. *A. spathulata* grows in the coldest region of South Africa, with winter temperatures down to 10 degrees F, and has survived outdoors in Utah with only a light cover. Here in Phoenix they rest during the heat of the summer, at which time they require little water. When nights begin to cool, mine grow and start to form buds, and I get buds scattered throughout the winter. During this time they will tolerate much more water. Deep pots are often used owing to the large rootstocks. The plants I have lost have all died during the summer if watered too often.

I plant mine in pure mineral soil, in narrow but deep pots. I give near full sun with afternoon shade. I water about every 10 days in the summer, after they get completely dry, and it's okay to let them stay dry even longer. In larger pots, watering intervals would be greater. When nights cool down I water more often so they never get bone dry, and by late November they are setting buds. I don't use much fertilizer but maybe I should. I don't protect from frost, except I would protect *A. orpenii*, which doesn't get frost in habitat.

Commonly grown species include *A. loganii*, *A. malherbei*, *A. orpenii*, *A. rosulata*, *A. rubrolineatus*, *A. schoonesii*, and *A. spathulata*.