Stuck flowers

I have seen many people ask questions on various forums regarding plants with flowers stuck down between the leaves and what they can do to get the flower stem to come up. I have also heard of some very weird and wonderful remedies that are ‘guaranteed’ to bring the flowers up.

This can happen to a plant during normal flowering season but I have found it is more common when a plant is flowering out of season. I don’t worry if I can see buds down between the leaves and they seem to take a while to come up. Some plants are just slower than others at elongating the peduncle, however when the flowers start to open when still down firmly between the leaves, then I take action. I have had a number of plants where the stuck flowers have eventually rotted and caused damage to the crown of the plant.

My solution is quite simple. Give the plant a good watering and bring it into the house where it is warm. The warmth in the house brings the peduncle up quite remarkably. The photo on this page shows a plant that has flowered out of season in the shadehouse. The flowers were opening down between the leaves. The second photo shows the flowers one week later after being in a warm house, and yes, my house is very warm. I do like the heater.
Forget about closing the plant in a dark cupboard, giving it all sorts of chemicals, banana peels, or cutting the head off a chicken and dancing naked at midnight. At the end of the day, I have found the warm house works almost every time. I have only had one plant that the flowers did not come up. Later I realised that I had been too late in bringing the plant in. Rot had already started down in the buds and the damage was already done. I had to cut quite a bit of the crown out to save the plant.

Why do some plants have stuck flowers? I don’t really know. As I have mentioned, it does tend to happen when a plant flowers out of season. A plant may flower normally every year and then one year it will have stuck flowers with no real rhyme or reason for it. Some may say a lack of fertiliser, though I can say that is not the case with my plants.

If your plant has stuck flowers and it is in the garden where you cannot bring it into a warm house, I would suggest keeping a close eye on it. Water tends to gather down between the leaves and contribute to the rot. Sometimes I use clothes pegs to hold the leaves apart as then more air can get to the affected area. If you can see that rot is starting or you are concerned about it as the stem has not come up at all, then cut the buds, flowers and stem out. Make sure you sprinkle Sulphur Powder or Mancozeb on the cut areas to help eliminate fungal problems.

May 17, 2015  admin  info  choked, clivia, flower, stuck, tactics

2 thoughts on “Stuck flowers”

sue wardell
April 6, 2016 at 9:26 am

Hi, as I live in Ireland my Clivia's are inside all year round. Maybe I might put them out for the summer months this year and hope they flower properly after a stint outside...Sue

admin0488  
April 14, 2016 at 6:24 am
Hi Sue,
They should be fine outside during summer months as long as they are in the shade. A bit of dappled sunlight is fine and they love good rain. I know people in England that have their plants outside in the warmer months so it should be fine for you.
regards,
Lisa

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