

Dinosaur Food



As one of the largest perennials on earth, it's no wonder *Gunnera tinctoria* is often referred to as Dinosaur Food. These clump-forming, herbaceous plants make an impressive statement around wet outdoor spaces (water gardens, rain gardens, ponds, bogs, etc.) with massive, palmate foliage.

Gunnera tinctoria

- **Use:** A stupendous foliage plant of grand proportions with large leaves held upright, it elicits no end of comments. Its huge leaves are lobed, toothed, and textured, and its flower is a tall, dense cone of nubby, purple-tinged florets. Be prepared to supply it with a lot of water! The specific epithet *tinctoria* is applied to plants with sap or other substance that can be used for dyeing. In the case of this species, the roots are high in tannins and can be used to create a black dye.
- **Exposure/Soil:** To grow well, it prefers sun - dappled shade and even moisture - high water. Grows best in well-drained, rich, average and clay soil. In need of something humidity tolerant? This may be a good option.
- **Growth:** Quickly reaches 8 ft. tall and wide. Possibly up to 10' tall and 14' wide over time.
- **Hardiness:** Zone 7-10; Perennial Do know that it can get very large and possibly weedy so we recommend you cut out and dispose of the flowers.
- **Foliage:** Semi-evergreen; Huge sharply toothed rhubarb like leaves to more than 4' across.
- **Flowers:** Three to six foot tall cone like flowers. Tiny, dull red flowers are densely packed on 3' tall inflorescences. The main bloom period occurs in summer, but can vary based on climate. The flowers are followed by small, round, orange-red fruits.