

*Kalanchoe daigremontiana* - Mother of Thousands plant:

From Wikipedia:



Scientific classification

Kingdom: Plantae

[Angiosperms; Eudicots; Core eudicots]

Order: Saxifragales

Family: Crassulaceae

Genus: *Kalanchoe*

Section: *Bryophyllum*

Species: *K. daigremontiana*

Binomial name: *Kalanchoe daigremontiana* Raym.-Hamet & H.Perrier

Synonyms

*Bryophyllum daigremontianum* Raym.-Hamet & H.Perrie

Common names: Devil's Backbone, Alligator Plant, Mexican Hat Plant, Mother of Thousands.

Mother of Thousands is a succulent plant native to Madagascar. This plant is distinguished by its ability to propagate via vegetative propagation. All parts of the plant are poisonous, which can even be fatal if ingested by infants or small pets.

Plants of the genus *Kalanchoe* able to propagate vegetatively are often included in section *Bryophyllum*, therefore *Kalanchoe daigremontiana* Hamet & Perrier is synonymously called *Bryophyllum daigremontianum* (Hamet & Perrier) Berger. (Some botanists consider *Bryophyllum* a distinct genus.)

Plants reach up to 1 m (3 feet) tall with opposite, fleshy oblong-lanceolate "leaves" that reach 15-20 cm (6-8 inches) long and about 3.2 cm (1.25 inches) wide. These are medium green above and blotched with purple underneath. The margins of these leaf-like organs have spoon-shaped bulbiferous spurs that bear young plants. The plantlets form roots while on the plant. The "leaves" are actually short, determinate, leaf-like branches that can be termed phylloclades or cladodes.

Adult plants can also develop lateral root structures on its main stalk, as high up as 10-15 cm from the ground. The plant has several nodes with two or three leaves on each node. The upper leaves of the plant tend to develop into disproportionately large structures, causing the main stalk to bend downwards and the lateral roots to take up root of their own, anchoring into the soil and eventually developing new primary stalks which establish themselves as independent plants.

Furthermore, *Kalanchoe daigremontiana* can go through a flowering season, where the main stalk elongates vertically upwards by as much as 30 cm, within a couple of days, developing an umbrella-like terminal inflorescence (a compound cyme) of small bell-shaped pink flowers. Flowering is, however, not an annual event and will occur sporadically if at all. Particularly in climates with distinct seasonal temperature differences, flowering is most frequently observed at the beginning of a warm season.

As a succulent plant, *K. daigremontiana* can survive prolonged periods of drought with little or no water. It is however not frost-hardy and typically dies if subjected to temperatures below freezing.

Plants of the genus *Kalanchoe* as well as many other plants growing in arid regions photosynthesize through Crassulacean acid metabolism (CAM).

*K. daigremontiana* is toxic, it contains a cardiac glycoside - daigremontianin. It can kill animals and humans.

*K. daigremontiana* is native to the Fiherenana valley and Androhibolava mountains in southwest Madagascar.