

Coleonema pulchrum



Multiply Your Breath of Heaven: A Guide to Propagating Coleonema Pulchrum

The "Breath of Heaven," also known as *Coleonema pulchrum*, is a delight for the senses with its airy foliage and bursts of tiny pink flowers. This South African native isn't just beautiful, it's also surprisingly easy to propagate, meaning you can multiply your fragrant foliage with just a bit of effort.

Here's how to get started:

Two Roads to Propagation: Cuttings vs. Seed

You can propagate *Coleonema pulchrum* in two ways:

1. **Cuttings:** This is the most common and reliable method, ensuring you get plants identical to the parent plant.
2. **Seed:** While possible, growing from seed takes longer and the resulting plants may not have the same characteristics as the parent.

This article will focus on the **cuttings method**, offering a higher success rate, especially for beginners.

When to Take Cuttings

The ideal time for taking Coleonema cuttings is during the **active growing season**, which is typically in **spring or early summer**. This is when the plant is putting out new growth and has the most energy for root development.

Equipment You'll Need:

- Sharp, sterilized pruning shears or a sharp knife
- Small pots (around 3-4 inches in diameter)
- Well-draining potting mix
- Rooting hormone (optional, but recommended)
- Watering can with a fine rose or spray bottle

Step-by-Step Guide to Coleonema Cuttings:

1. **Prepare the Pots:** Fill your pots with the well-draining potting mix. Water well and allow excess water to drain.
2. **Take Your Cuttings:** Choose healthy, non-flowering stems. Using your sterilized shears, cut a 3-4 inch section from the tip of the stem, making the cut just below a leaf node. Remove the lower leaves, leaving 2-3 pairs at the top.
3. **Apply Rooting Hormone (Optional):** Dip the cut end of each cutting into the rooting hormone, following the manufacturer's instructions. This encourages faster and stronger root development.
4. **Plant the Cuttings:** Poke a small hole in the center of each prepared pot. Carefully insert the bottom inch of the cutting into the hole, ensuring the removed leaves are not buried. Gently firm the soil around the base of the cutting.
5. **Water and Cover:** Water the cuttings lightly, ensuring the soil is moist but not waterlogged. To create a humid environment, you can cover the pots loosely with a clear

plastic bag, supported by sticks to prevent direct contact with the cuttings.

6. **Provide Indirect Light:** Place the cuttings in a warm location with bright, indirect light. Avoid direct sunlight as it can scorch the delicate new growth.
7. **Monitor & Care:** Check the cuttings regularly for moisture, watering lightly whenever the soil feels dry to the touch. After 4-6 weeks, tug gently on the cuttings – resistance indicates root growth.
8. **Transplanting Time:** Once the cuttings have developed a strong root system (usually after a couple of months), you can transplant them into larger pots or directly into your garden. Choose a sunny spot with well-drained soil.

Enjoy Your Breath of Heaven Bounty!

Propagating *Coleonema pulchrum* may seem daunting at first, but with these simple steps, you can cultivate an abundance of these fragrant beauties. Enjoy their delightful scent and delicate blooms throughout the year!