



Growing inspiration in your garden...

## PRESS RELEASE

### Brian's patience is rewarded as bird of paradise flowers (MRF613)

Despite having been a grower for more than 50 years, Mr Fothergill's trials manager Brian Talman still enjoys a horticultural challenge. During those years he has learned the value of patience, and nowhere more so than with his experience of *Strelitzia reginae*, also known as bird of paradise.

Brian sowed the seed of the flamboyant South African native back in 2008, and waited for it to germinate in his greenhouse; the process took two years, but finally green shoots emerged. He has been nurturing the plants ever since, and in December 2016 he was rewarded when the first flower appeared on a 2m tall plant - six years after it first emerged.

"It has been growing in general purpose compost all that time", explains Brian, "and it even managed to survive being frosted once, despite its tenderness. It's great to see it flowering after all that time!"

In the wild, *Strelitzia reginae* is thought to be pollinated by the sunbird (*Nectarinia afra*), which lands on the corolla tongue or spathe, probing for nectar. The tongue opens, pollen is released on to the bird's feet and feathers, from where it is transferred to the swollen stigma of another flower.

Gardeners who fancy a similar challenge to Brian's can buy a packet of 10 seeds of *Strelitzia reginae* for £2.55 from Mr Fothergill's.



For more information on Mr Fothergill's range, or to request a catalogue, please visit [www.mr-fothergills.co.uk](http://www.mr-fothergills.co.uk), telephone 0845 371 0518 or write to Mr Fothergill's, Gazeley Road, Kentford, Suffolk CB8 7QB.

**Ends**

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