

## Emerald Goddess Gardens emeraldgoddessgardens.com

Botanical Name	Hamelia patens glabra, lutea or Hamelia nodusa
Common Name	African, Mexican or Yellow Firebush
Mature Size	8 to 10 feet
Bloom Color	Golden Yellow to Orange
Bloom Period	Late Spring to Fall
Boom Form	Clustered Slender Trumpets
Water	Moderate
Light	Full Sun
USDA Zone	9, 10, 11
Fragrance	None
Uses	Boundary, Border, Specimen, Lg Potted Feature
Special Features	Attracts Hummingbirds



***Hamelia patens, or Firebush*** is a large growing semi-tropical shrub that is native to Central and South America and several subtropical zones of the United States it is one of about 16 species or cultivars and a group of plants that there is a great deal of confusion, misidentification, and expert disagreement as to the correct taxonomical classifications and nomenclature.

Applying the Keep It Simple principle we distinguish the 4 types that we sell as follows, *Hamelia patens* (Scarlet Firebush) and the only one (so far as we know) that is actually native to Florida. *Hamelia patens glabra* (aka *Hamelia lutea* or *Hamelia nodosa*) commonly called African, Mexican or simply Yellow Firebush; *Hamelia patens compacta* or Firefly, and *Hamelia cuprea* or Bahama Firebush, commonly called Bahama Firebush (although it is native to Cuba, Haiti and the Caymans, and not the Bahamas).

The African or Yellow Firebush is easily distinguished from the native type as the flowers are bright golden yellow, blushing to orange, and the leaves are smooth. It grows slightly more dense, compact and a bit shorter, maturing as a big rounded bush at around 10 feet left to its own devices. However, it is most frequently grown as hedge at 3 to 6 feet and is a great way to bring year round texture and color to the tropical landscape.

The leaves are an attractive bronze blushed green year round and the plant is covered in clusters of the slender tubular trumpet flowers in combination of bright orange and yellow berry like buds, slender golden yellow trumpets, tipped and blushed in scarlet orange.

It is a great low maintenance, easy care shrub that butterflies, hummingbirds and other birds adore.

Firebush will grow in a wide range of soil conditions and does not require much care. It needs irrigation until it becomes established, but then is quite drought tolerant. It does best in full sun, but will tolerate the shade, just taking on a more leggy open habit and produces fewer blooms.

Direct planting of 4 inch starter size plants is not generally recommended, so for the best results, repot your new plant and allow it to grow for several weeks until the new pot is filled with roots before setting out into the landscape:

.For quick answers to your growing and planting questions, just email us at [service@emeraldgoddessgardens.com](mailto:service@emeraldgoddessgardens.com)

If you don't know your USDA Planting Zone, you can check the map on our website site at [emeraldgoddessgardens.com](http://emeraldgoddessgardens.com)

## Care of Your New Plant

Here are a few basic guidelines for handling and caring for your new plant:

Direct planting of 4 inch starter size plants or plugs directly into the landscape is not generally recommended, with a few exceptions. So, for the best results with your new plant we suggest that it be repotted into a larger pot and allowed to grow larger until the new pot is filled with roots before setting out.

Check the recommended USDA Zone Range for the plant. Many gardeners are able to successfully grow plants outside their recommended Zones, but this is dependent upon providing the type of environment and care the plant needs.

- Immediately repot the new plant into a 6 inch to 10 inch diameter pot. A 6 inch pot is recommended for starter plugs, and a 10 inch in recommended for 4 inch diameter starter pots.
- Use a good quality commercial bagged potting media.
- Apply a high quality, slow release plant food according to the label directions. Do not use hot, all chemical, quick release fertilizes like 6-6-6 or 10-10-10.
- Check the recommended location in the plant specifics and position accordingly. Note that plants that are suitable for growing in full sun should be acclimated, and young plants should be protected from direct, very hot sun while they are becoming established.
- Maintain consistent and uniform moisture in the soil. Take care not to over water. Some plants prefer to dry a bit between waterings, so check the plant specifics.
- Packing crystals may be re-used to conserve water, but do so with caution as they hold 6000 times their weight in water.
- If re-using crystals, mix and incorporate them thoroughly throughout the potting media.
- Be sure the pot can drain, and that the bottom of the pot does not sit submerged in water for more than a few hours.
- Monitor for signs of disease or insects and treat accordingly.
- Protect from frost and freeze, as even cold tolerant plants can be damaged by cold when young, or during cold conditions more severe or longer duration than the average for the Zone Range.
- Prune or pinch lightly and often when the plant is young and actively growing to strengthen the central stalk, encourage branching, and build uniform shape.
- Monitor for signs of disease or insects and treat accordingly

Many tropical and subtropical plants can be grown as potted plants indefinitely, and can be successfully wintered over indoors in colder climates, so long as they are moved indoors well ahead of temps into the 30°F's, are maintained in warm environment (minimum 40°F) with adequate, full spectrum light, consistent soil moisture is maintained, and any pest or disease issue are promptly and properly addressed.

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