



## Emerald Goddess Gardens

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Botanical Name	Alibertia Belize
Common Name	White Shooting Star Flower
Mature Size	6 to 8 feet
Bloom Color	Slightly blue toned white
Bloom Period	Warm Season
Boom Form	Long tubular star shape
Water	Medium
Light	Best in light shade
USDA Zone	9, 10, 11
Fragrance	Light
Uses	Hedge, Mass Planting, Accent, Mixed Perennials
Special Features	Rare, less known, and not widely sold or cultivated. Fragrant, Easy to Grow, Rare, Long Bloom Cycle, Attracts Butterflies



**Alibertia 'Belize' or White Star Flower** is very pretty and fragrant tropical flowering shrub that is native to the eastern coast of South and Central America. While it is an appealing and easy to grow shrub with many interesting and versatile features it is a somewhat rare, not well known, and very under utilized plant.

**Belize** appears to frequently be confused with other plants (*Jasmine nitidum* or *Star Jasmine* and *August rivalis* or *Needle Flower*, for example). There are several dozen species of the **Alibertia** genus. However, it seems that only **Belize** and a different type that bears an edible fruit (*Alibertia marmalada* or *edulis* are becoming better known. **Belize** does not produce fruit.

**Alibertia Belize** matures into a large 6 to 8 foot shrub with long, narrow, glossy dark green foliage, and a somewhat open, upright growth habit.

It produces fragrant tubular, star shaped slightly blue toned white flowers with a distinctive tan to brown scale like anther lining the juncture of the petals in long bloom cycle that begins in early summer and lasts until the days grow shorter and the nights drop out of the 70°F's. The flowers are most fragrant in the evening and early morning. Butterflies appear to be attracted to the fragrant, nectar rich flowers, but do not seem to be interested in the plant as a host.

This plant makes a great hedge row, background for layered beds or as a taller accent in mixed perennial beds.

Direct planting of 4 inch starter size plants is not recommended. We suggest repotting the starter into and allowing it to grow larger before setting it out. When the new pot has filled with roots, here are a few hints for growing Alibertia Belize successfully within it's recommended USDA Zone Range.

- Plant or repot in rich, fertile, high organic content soil or media. Amend the planting area with high quality compost as needed.
- Select a location in light shade to full sun. A location protected from direct hot afternoon sun is preferred for best appearance of the foliage.
- Supply supplemental irrigation, but take care not to overwater.
- Feed a high quality bloom boosting, slow release plant food with the initial planting and 2 x yearly thereafter.
- Pinch or prune lightly often to control legginess and encouraging new sprouts. Prune after flowering to control size and shape.

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

f 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 Shade Garden Plant

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

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 plant or repot the new plant into a prepared bed or a 6 inch to 10 inch diameter pot that can drain easily and thoroughly.
- Use a good quality commercial potting media.
- Apply a high quality, slow release plant food according to the label directions. Do not use hot, all chemical fertilizers like 6-6-6 or 10-10-10.
- Locate in light to moderate shade. This plant must be protected from hot, direct afternoon sun.
- Maintain consistent and uniform moisture in the soil. Take care not to over water.
- Packing crystals may be reused to conserve water, but do so with caution as they hold 6000 times their weight in water. If reusing the 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.
- Supplement feed with a water soluble plant food every 2-3 weeks according to the label directions.
- Prune or pinch lightly and often when the plant is young and actively growing to strengthen the central stalk and encourage branching and build uniform shape.
- 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, and tropicals will perform better, flower earlier, and live longer within their Zone Range when protected from cold temperatures.

Many tropical and subtropical plants can be grown as potted plants indefinitely, and can be successfully wintered over, or adapted to growing indoors year round 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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