

**Emerald Goddess Gardens**  
**[emeraldgoddessgardens.com](http://emeraldgoddessgardens.com)**

Botanical Name	Hamelia cuprea
Common Name	Bahama Firebush
Mature Size	10 to 20 feet
Bloom Color	Yellow to Orange
Bloom Period	Warm Season
Boom Form	Bell shaped clusters of 2 to 4
Water	Moderate
Light	Full Sun
USDA Zone	9, 10, 11
Fragrance	None
Uses	Boundary, Border, Specimen, Lg Potted Feature
Special Features	Colorful easy care



***Hamelia cuprea* or Bahama Firebush** is a large growing tropical shrub that, despite the common name is native to Cuba, Haiti and Caymen Islands, but not the Bahama Islands. It is frequently misrepresented as a plant native Florida, and although it is closely related to the native *Hamelia patens*.

It is easily distinguished from its native cousin. The flowers are larger, have a more open bell shape vs the slender trumpets of *Hamelia patens*, and begin as bright yellow and age to orange. It has smaller, elliptical light green leaves with a copper toned blush. Whether it is more, less or equally as attractive to hummingbirds and other wildlife appear to vary widely.

It is most easily grown in a small tree like bush form. ***Bahama 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.

It makes a great barrier border, background or screen plantings in mass, or is a great stand alone accent, or makes a knock out patio tree, and attracts wildlife. However native plant purists argue against this so as to not risk contamination of the gene pool of the native species with non-native species.

Direct planting of 4 inch starter size plants is not generally recommended, so for the best results, replot 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 [emeraldgoddessgardens@gmail.com](mailto:emeraldgoddessgardens@gmail.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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