



Emerald Goddess Gardens

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Botanical Name	Hamelia patens 'Firefly'
Common Name	Firebush Firefly
Mature Size	3' to 6' x 4'
Bloom Color	Yellow Orange Red
Bloom Period	Late Spring to Fall
Boom Form	Trumpet Shaped Cluster
Water	Moderate
Light	Full Sun
USDA Zone	8B & South
Fragrance	None
Uses	Boundary, Border, Specimen, Lg Potted Feature
Special Features	Attracts Hummingbirds, butterflies



Hamelia patens or Firebush has been among the most popular items for the subtropical landscape and especially for butterfly gardens and wildlife habitat areas in the past few years. The large, Florida Native type grows lush and full and is always nearly covered with bright scarlet to orange tubular flowers that hummingbirds and butterflies cannot resist. Birds enjoy the berry that follows the flower. It is a great plant for any area where you like to draw in the wildlife, as many critters find the flowers and the berry irresistible, however the native cultivar grows very large easily getting 12' to 15' tall and as big around, making it awkward and problematic for small urban lots. The newer 'Firefly' cultivar bridges that problem.

Firefly is a somewhat smaller growing hybrid cultivar of the non native African hamelia species. It has the same tubular shaped flowers, green ovate leaves with red new growth, but on a smaller scale and with more yellow coloration in the flower.

Firefly Firebush matures into a dense, rounded shrub ranging from 3' to 6' tall, and is equally as attractive to hummingbirds, butterflies, and birds as it's larger cousin.

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 border, background or screen plantings in mass, or is a great stand alone accent, or makes a knock out small patio standard form tree.

For quick answers to your growing or planting questions, just email us at emeraldgoddessgardens@gmail.com

If you don't know your USDA Planting Zone, you can check the map on our website site at 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 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 the recommended size for starter plugs) 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 so that the plant can receive direct, full spectrum light for several hours daily, but is 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 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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