



Botanical Name	Odontonema callistachyum
Common Name	Purple Firespike
Mature Size	6' – 8' x 6' – 8'
Bloom Color	Purple
Bloom Period	Late summer into fall
Boom Form	Tubular clusters
Water	Moderate until well established
Light	Best in moderate shade
USDA Zone	8, 9, 10, 11
Fragrance	None
Uses	Mixed Perennials, Accent, Anchor
Special Features	Colorful, easy to grow, attracts hummingbirds
Grower Notes	Allow few seasons to establish for full bloom potential



**Purple Firespike (*Odontonema callistachyum*)** is fast, upright growing, semi tropical shrub. It grows into a large multi stemmed shrub that thickens quickly as it puts up new shoots from the root system. The waffled, dark green leaves are narrow, oblong and arranged symmetrically. The leaves are slightly ruffled along the margins with long pointed tips.

Among it's best features is not only producing showy flowers that hummingbirds and butterflies love in the shade, but that it also does so well into fall. The flowers are showy sprays of bright pink toned purple double lipped tubes that wave above the main body of the plant on tall spikes. The plant remains evergreen in tropics and subtropical climates, but is generally killed to ground by the first frost in Zones 8, and sometimes 9B and then resprouts from the root system.

It's an essential for mixed perennial beds in hummingbird and butterfly gardens, makes a great accent or anchor plant for corners or background, works well in naturalized and wildlife habitat areas for nectar value and color.

For the best results:

- Locate in well draining fertile soil
- Select a moderately shaded location
- Provide supplemental irrigation until very well established
- Feed a good quality slow release plant food twice yearly
- Prune for shape after flowering
- Protect from cold until very well established.

For quick answers to your growing or 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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