



Emerald Goddess Gardens

emeraldgoddessgardens.com

Botanical Name	Penta lanceolata
Common Name	Egyptian Star Flower
Mature Size	3'
Bloom Color	Red
Bloom Period	Perpetual in warm climates
Boom Form	Star shaped clusters
Water	Moderate
Light	Best In Full Sun
USDA Zone	9B & South
Fragrance	Lightly fragrant
Uses	Mixed perinneal borders
Special Features	Easy to grow, Attracts hummingbirds, butterflies



Pentas are one of my favorite perennial plants. They have a never ending abundance of flowers nearly year round in warm climates, and put on a non stop show. And, in my opinion, are really under used as bedding and border plants. There are a lot of new hybrids that grow smaller and more compact than this one does and are available in a rainbow of colors.

This particular one is probably the oldest and one of the best, in my opinion. It seems to have been somewhat forgotten and pushed out of mind by all the new types. This tall growing red has become increasingly hard to find within the trade, as most commercial growers have shifted to the newer hybrids.

All the new varieties are great and have many attractive features, however, this old one just can't be beat for hardiness and bloom-a-bility. It is hardy, easy to grow, and can withstand considerable abuse without serious complaint, plus it is easy to root, making it a pass along favorite. P

This penta grows tall, at about 3' feet, with bright red blooms, and is especially attractive to both butterflies and hummingbirds (and my Mom's Yorkshire terrier..for reasons nobody quite understands, red pentas flowers are one of his favorite snacks).

Pentas have dark green elongated pointed leaves that are deeply veined and furry. They show a profusion of clusters of tubular nectar saturated flowers with 5 petaled star shaped ends from late in the spring until the first cold snap. They are evergreen perennials in the subtropics and are generally grown as an annuals, or grown potted and wintered over indoors, north of Zone 9. Pentas are native to Africa.

For the best result, plant them in loose fertile soil that will retain moisture. They prefer full sun, but will tolerate some light shade. Maintain uniform moisture for the best results and longest lasting bloom and start them out with a good quality bloom boosting type fertilize to maintain steady nutrition through out the bloom season. Prune when they become more open and leggy that is desired and they will quickly regrow and continue flowering.

They are great in mass bed plantings and also make a great potted plant and add height and interest to mixed pot gardens. These grow tall enough to make an excellent background for other lower growing plants where a stepped down layered look is desired.

For quick answers to your growing and 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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