



## Emerald Goddess Gardens emeraldgoddessgardens.com

Botanical Name	Justicia brandegeana 'Fruit Cocktail'
Common Name	Fruit Cocktail Shrimp
Mature Size	2'x2'
Bloom Color	Golden Lime Rose Pink
Bloom Period	Perpetual
Boom Form	Unusual Shrimp Shape
Water	Moderate
Light	Best in Light Shade
USDA Zone	8B & South
Fragrance	None
Uses	Beds Borders Pots
Special Features	Unusual Flowers Attracts Butterflies & Hummingbirds



**Shrimp Plants** or **Beloperone guttata** are a part of large plant family named Justicia. It is a very big species and has lots of interesting cultivars. Of the Justicias, commonly called **Shrimp Plants**, the red and bright yellow variety are probably the most popular and best known.

**'Fruit Cocktail'** is a newer introduction that came into the Florida market a few years ago. It is a smaller, lower grower that is always topped with bright golden lime colored bracts with small pinkish red tufts. (A *bract* is a type of plant tissue that is not actually a flower, but a form of leaf tissue...also seen in poinsettias and bougainvilleas). The actual 'flower' is then the long tongue shaped pair of oval petals that extend out of the bract. This one has golden lime colored bracts with deep rose pink petals. The flower resembles a large shrimp in shape..hence the common name. Very interesting and unique, and always a treat, even if you've seen them before. This particular cultivar is just one of those plants that always makes you smile. It is just a bright, happy, cheerful summer plant.

These are easy to grow. Just plant them in well drained soil. Pick a lightly shaded location for the best results (they will grow in the full sun, but need more irrigation and fertilize. Shrimp plants benefit from a regular pruning. This one will not grow tall and has a more bushy compact growing habit, so is pretty maintenance free. Plan to feed it a couple of times yearly with good quality slow release food and prune it back if it becomes more open and leggy than you like.

Shrimps work great in mixed perennial beds, borders or any other pot where you want a mass of continuous color. The bloom cycle is long, beginning in the early spring and lasting until early winter in warm climates. They lend great interest, texture and color and are nice in combination with crotons, coleus or similar plants with colored leaves. This one makes a very nice potted accent plant for the porch, patio or poolside. The blooms are long lasting.

This plant is considered a tropical. It will, however, survive brief dips into the low 30s to upper 20's in semi tropical zones with only minor damage. In zones with sustained cold temps it can be grown potted and wintered over, or makes a vigorous fast growing annual for summer color.

Other colors and types of this species are available please check our website.

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 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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