



Emerald Goddess Gardens

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Common Name	Bleeding Heart Vine
Botanical Name	<i>Clerodendrum thomsonia variegata</i>
Mature Size	5' to 6' x 6'
Bloom Color	White & Red
Bloom Period	Summer
Boom Form	Unusual Calyx
Water	Moderate
Light	Light Shade
USDA Zone	9 and South
Fragrance	None
Uses	Accent, Specimen
Special Features	Unusual Flowers Variegated Foliage



Bleeding Heart Vine is a lovely and unique member of the *Verbena Family*, and is a very old Southern heirloom favorite. It has graced the shady nooks and corners of both fine landscapes and simple cottages throughout the South for more than 100 years. It is also commonly called *Bag* or *Balloon Flower*.

At one time it was very common, but like many wonderful old plants there came a time when it was pushed out of the commercial market place by new and different cultivars, and currently can be somewhat difficult to find in local nurseries and garden centers, although it seems to have been recently rediscovered.

Legend has it that the plant sprung up from the tears of a broken-hearted maiden (imprisoned in a tower, of course), which, of course, adds to its desirability and charm. In the South it is often found growing in old cemeteries and around homestead memorials as a poignant reminder of both beauty of love and the pain of loss.

This variety of bleeding heart is a *Clerodendrum* and should not be confused with *Dicentras*, which are also commonly called '*Bleeding Hearts*' but are a completely different species. This *Bleeding Heart Vine* is a semi-tropical climbing vine that is native to Western Africa. It grows as a a loose, climbing, vine like shrub. The leaves are large and dark, shiny, black green.

In the late spring to early summer it bursts forth with boughs unique flowers made up of pure white balloon shaped calyxes from which corollae of bright blood red (that resemble hearts) emerge making a striking unusual contrast. *Variegata* has the added attraction of pretty green and cream leaves that add color and texture to the landscape even w hen not in bloom.

Direct planting of 4 inch starter size plants is not recommended, so for the best results with your new plant, we recommend it be re-potted and allowed to grow larger before setting out in the landscape within the recommended USDA Zone range.

When the new pot has filled with roots and the plant is larger, then here a few hints for successful growing in the landscape. can be grown as a potted plant indefinitely.

- Plant in fertile well draining, slightly acidic soil. Amend with high quality organic material as needed.
- Locate very lightly dappled shade, or cool morning light.
- Provide supplemental irrigation.
- Feed a good quality, slow release, bloom boosting fertilize with the initial planting and yearly in the Spring thereafter.
- Prune lightly and often when young to encourage branching and after flowering to promote uniform shape and control size.
- Protect from frost and freeze until very well established. (Considered Root Hardy when very well established in Zones 8B and 9A)

For quick answers to your growing and planting questions, just email us at service@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 re-potted 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 re-pot 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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You can check you USDA Zone by visiting our website at emeraldgoddessgardens.com