



FYN Garden Q & A Series

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FYN Topic: White Button

Question: Someone said this plant growing in a Pine Island park is not a weed but perhaps a wild-flower. I love how it looks this time year. It has burgundy stems and leaves with small white flower accents. Someone said it is called, 'Forget me not.' What is it and would you grow it here? A Master Gardener

Answer: This attention-getting plant is *Alternanthera brasiliana*. It was introduced into Florida from tropical places far south of here. You will find it growing naturally throughout the Caribbean and in Brazil. Common names are, bouton blanc, White Button and bachelor's button because of its pom-pom-like flowers. Another common name is 'live-forever' because its name comes from the Portuguese word, perpétua-do-brasil (live-forever in Brazil). Because of its hot tropical burgundy color each fall, this plant appears perfect for the landscape when covered with white blossoms. But, like many tropical herbs, this one looks perfect until soil dries out and climate turns cold when it begins looking ragged and unruly very quickly.



Useful Links

<http://www.floridayards.org>

<http://fyn.ifas.ufl.edu>

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/>

<http://gardeningsolutions.ifas.ufl.edu>

Thomas Becker is an extension agent for the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) program at the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the Horticulture Help Desk at 239-533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. or by emailing Extgardener@leegov.com. Visit his Web page at <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/FYN/FYNHome.shtml>

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