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Acanthaceae (Acanthus Family)



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## *Amsonia tabernaemontana*

*Amsonia tabernaemontana* Walter

Eastern Bluestar, Blue Dogbane, Willow  
Amsonia, Woodland Bluestar

Apocynaceae (Dogbane Family)

Synonym(s):

USDA Symbol: amta2



Bruso, George H.

USDA Native Status: [L48 \(N\)](#)

Eastern bluestar is a 1-3 ft., erect-stemmed [perennial](#) forming large, multi-stemmed clumps. The smooth stems are crowded with narrow, [oval](#) leaves which turn golden-yellow in the fall. Blue, tubular flowers, the rim flaring to a star-shape, appear in loosely conjoined clusters at the tips of the stems.

The species name commemorates the 16th-century German herbalist Jakobus Theodorus Tabernaemontanus. Greek "apocynum" noxious to dogs. Distasteful.

## From the Image Gallery



[14](#) photo(s) available in the Image Gallery.

## Plant Characteristics

**Duration:** [Perennial](#)

**Habit:** [Herb](#)

**Leaf Arrangement:** [Alternate](#)

**Leaf Shape:** [Lanceolate](#)

**Leaf Pubescence:** [Glabrous](#)

**Leaf Margin:** Ciliate

**Leaf Apex:** [Acuminate](#)

**Fruit Type:** [Follicle](#)

**Size Notes:** Up to about 3 feet tall.

## Bloom Information

**Bloom Color:** Blue , Purple

**Bloom Time:** Mar , Apr , May

**Bloom Notes:** Anthers yellow-orange. Flowers often partially hidden by uppermost leaves.

## Distribution

**USA:** AL , AR , CT , DE , FL , GA , IL , IN , KS , KY , LA , MA , MD , MO , MS , NC , NJ , NY , OH , OK , PA , SC , TN , TX , VA

**Native Distribution:** MD & s.e. VA to s. IL & infrequently to KS, s. to FL & e. TX

**Native Habitat:** Wet, sandy sites in thin woods & on plains.

## Growing Conditions

**Light Requirement:** Part Shade

**Soil Moisture:** Wet

**Soil Description:** Wet to moist, sandy soils.

**Conditions Comments:** This species should be cut back after flowering. Blue star has naturalized northeast as far as Massachusetts. A similar species, *A. illustris*, occurs inland from MO & KS to TX.

## Propagation

**Description:** Seed can be sown outside, 1/2" deep, after collection. Seedlings germinate immediately, but flower the second year following germination.

**Seed Collection:** Long, slender follicles turn tan when they are mature, about 4-5 months after flowering. Corky seeds are cinnamon-brown when mature. Store dried seeds in a sealed, refrigerated container. Can be stored up to four years.

**Seed Treatment:** For seeds that have been stored, cut an end off the seed and soak in water 2-3 days. This will aid germination.

**Commercially Avail:** yes

## National Wetland Indicator Status

Region: AGCP AK AW CB EMP GP HI MW NCNE WMVE

Status: FACW FAC FACW FACW FACW

This information is derived from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [National Wetland Plant List, Version 3.1](#) (Lichvar, R.W. 2013. The National Wetland Plant List: 2013 wetland ratings. Phytoneuron 2013-49: 1-241). [Click here](#) for map of regions.

## From the National Organizations Directory

According to the species list provided by Affiliate Organizations, this plant is on display at the following locations:

[Delaware Nature Society](#) - Hockessin, DE

[Mt. Cuba Center](#) - Hockessin, DE

## Bibliography

Bibref 1620 - [Gardening with Native Plants of the South \(Reprint Edition\)](#) (2009) Wasowski, S. with A. Wasowski

Bibref 318 - [Native Texas Plants: Landscaping Region by Region](#) (2002) Wasowski, S. & A. Wasowski

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## Web Reference

Webref 23 - [Southwest Environmental Information Network](#) (2009) SEINet - Arizona Chapter

## Research Literature

Reslit 1100 - [Activity of alpha-galactosidase in immobilized cells of Amsonia tabernaemontana Walt](#) (1998) J. Poor

Reslit 1101 - [beta-galactosidase in immobilized cells of Amsonia tabernaemontana](#) (1997) J. Poor, V. Blanarikova and A. Klimecky

Reslit 1465 - [Anatomical structures of the VA mycorrhiza in the Apocynaceae \(Gentianales\)](#) (1995) H. C. Weber, A. Klahr and M. MarronHeimbuch

Reslit 2094 - [Cell-suspension culture of Amsonia-tabernaemontana Walter - Growth, organogenesis and alkaloid production](#) (1981) M. Furmanowa and L. Rapczewska

Reslit 2095 - [Amsonia tabernaemontana Walter \(Apocynaceae\) in tissue culture--growth and alkaloid production](#) (1977) M. Furmanowa and L. Rapczewska

This information was provided by the [Florida Wildflower Foundation](#).

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## Additional resources

**USDA:** Find [Amsonia tabernaemontana](#) in USDA Plants

**FNA:** Find [Amsonia tabernaemontana](#) in the Flora of North America (if available)

**Google:** Search Google for *Amsonia tabernaemontana*

Go

## Metadata

**Record Modified:** 2023-09-11

**Research By:** TWC Staff

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