

airlayered.

Repotting: A quick grower, this plant should be repotted yearly or it can become pot bound. Roots can also be cut back hard without much shock. Pot this plant in 50% potting mix of bark, Canadian Sphagnum peat moss and vermiculite, 25% small lava rock, and 25% Turface.

Repot when minimum night temps are low to mid 60's and can continue all summer long. Soil should be well draining.

Design and Styling: Informal upright and cascade are good styling choices.

Lavender Star Flower Care Sheet



Brought to you by
S & S Bonsai of Colorado Springs, Colorado
(Most of the included information is obtained from several
online sources.)

*"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if
you were to live forever."
— Mahatma Gandhi —*



S & S Bonsai
Steven Alford

1024 Bonfoy Ave.
Colorado Springs CO 80909

Bus: 719-633-9110 cell: 719-332-0546
fax: 719-633-9110 support@bonsaitoolchest.com
www.bonsaitoolchest.com

The Lavender Star Flower

(Grewia occidentalis)

General Information: The Lavender Star Flower is a compact evergreen tree, which originates in Australia and Africa. In all, you would find more than 400 different species around the world. The flowers produced on this tree are truly magnificent, lavender in color. The Lavender Star Flower is an ideal choice for bonsai, reaching about 10 inches tall by age eight.

Lavender starflower is a stately broadleaf evergreen with an irregularly tiered, upright habit that displays starry mauve or lavender flowers spring through fall. It is a native of southern Africa with a tolerance for wind, seasonally dry and wet soils, and salt. The alluring flowers arise in between the leaves. Occasionally orange fruits develop that will ripen to purple. Nectar-seeking insects and birds will frequent this shrub while in flower.

Lavender starflower grows well in full sun to dappled partial sun in nearly any fertile, well-draining soil. Growth will be stunted and slow in too dry of a soil, so it is important to ensure adequate moisture in the warm months. Having a shallow root system, great care is needed after transplant so it does not dry out. It is an excellent tropical bonsai stock and large wall espalier. If never pruned, the natural form will create a plant that seems appropriate for an Asian garden, with interesting branch levels and picturesque stature.

The genus *Grewia* was named by Carolus Linnaeus in honor of the English physician, vegetable anatomist, physiologist and botanist Nehemiah Grew (1641-1712). It contains about 100 species of evergreen and deciduous trees, shrubs and climbers naturally occurring throughout warm regions of the Old World, primarily Africa, Asia and Australia.

The foliage of these plants is simple, with three to five distinct veins, and borne alternately on the stems. Leaf margins may be smooth, toothed or oc-

asionally lobed. Flowers appear singly or in small clusters between the leaves or at the ends of the branches, and typically have five-petals surrounding a center of yellow, filamentous stamens (male reproductive structures). The petals may be white, yellow, lilac or rarely brown. The unusual fruits that follow are stone fruits like those of peaches or plums, and may be four-angled and showy.

Some *Grewia* species are grown for their beautiful flowers; others serve as forage and feed for animals, and a few are consumed by humans as a food source or for medicinal purposes. Cattle and animals such as black rhino, giraffe and others, and the larvae of some species of butterfly, feed on its leaves while birds like bulbuls and barbets feast on its fruits. The fruits have high sugar content and are used for making milkshakes and brewing beer. The tree has several medicinal qualities. Shampoo made from its bark is used to prevent the graying of hair; bark soaked in hot water is used to treat wounds; while the root extracts are effective in childbirth.

African starbush (*Grewia occidentalis*) is a stately broadleaf evergreen with an irregularly tiered, upright habit and pretty, star-shaped mauve or lavender flowers from spring through fall. The forest raisin (*Grewia lasiocarpa*), native to Africa, is a fast-growing small tree with large, attractive, starry pink flowers in summer. These are followed by four-lobed, fuzzy red fruits which eventually turn black, and are very appealing to birds and other wildlife.

Although hardiness and cultural requirements vary, most *Grewia* species prefer well-drained soil and sunny to partly sunny conditions. They are usually easy to grow from seed, and may spread readily around the garden, sometimes escaping cultivation. These versatile plants may be used as hedges or in mixed borders, and some even make great bonsai specimens.

CARE

General Care :

Temperature: A good average temperature for this species is 65°F to 70°. Summer it outdoors, returning it indoors when nighttime temperatures drop to the 50's.

Lighting: Lavender Star Flower prefers bright sun—try a western or southern window exposure. If not available, use grow lights. Full sun promotes the best growth and heaviest blooms. This plant can be grown in both sunny and shaded locations.

Watering: Keep the soil evenly moist. The Starflower likes plenty of water but does not like wet feet

Growth will be stunted and slow in too dry of a soil, so it is important to ensure adequate moisture in the warm months.

Fertilizing: pH: 5.5. Fertilize weekly with a well-balanced fertilizer at half strength, and reduce it to once every two to three weeks in the winter. Supplement occasionally with a fertilizer for acid loving plants like azaleas and camellias. This species becomes chlorotic easily; it is a good idea to supplement with chelated iron once a year to avoid problems.

Pruning / Training: The Starflower can be cut back heavily as desired. Prune after flowering to promote new flowers, can be wired successfully. Lavender Star Flower is a vigorous grower. Prune the tips of this species back to two sets of leaves at any time of the year when the shoots have elongated. Remove the flowers from young trees to preserve the tree's energy as its shape is being developed. Prune mature specimens right after the blooms have dropped to maintain the form. This shrub can be wired at any time of the year. It is easy to work with, but use aluminum wire only.

Insects / Pests: Use caution in butterfly gardens, some butterfly larvae will feed on the leaves. Few problems with insects or disease.

Propagation: Easily grown from cuttings of new growth in the spring. Seeds can be successfully propagated however it takes 2-3 weeks to germinate. Can also be