

'STORM CLOUD' BLUESTAR

Amsonia tabernaemontana 'Storm Cloud'



Characteristics

- Type: Perennial
- Native Range: Central United States
- Zone: 3 to 9
- Height: 2.00 to 3.00 feet
- Spread: 2.00 to 3.00 feet
- Bloom Time: May
- Bloom Description: Blue
- Sun: Full sun to part shade
- Water: Medium
- Maintenance: Low
- Suggested Use: Rain Garden
- Flower: Showy, Good Cut
- Leaf: Good Fall
- Attracts: Butterflies
- Tolerate: Deer, Drought, Clay Soil

Culture

A great alternative to shrubs. Drenched in tall flower clusters atop strong stems, Bluestar is stunning in cut-flower arrangements. Low maintenance, heat and humidity tolerant and deer resistant, *Amsonia* 'Storm Cloud' threatens to become a favorite! It has near-black stems and olive-green, silver-veined foliage. Billowing, breathtaking blue, periwinkle-blue, star-shaped flowers cover the foliage in late spring. *Amsonia* 'Storm Cloud' thrives in northern and southern gardens. Younger plants are vase-like and then mature to a wide mounded habit. Easily grown in average, medium, well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. Prefers moist, loamy soils. Tolerates some drought. When grown in full sun, plants often require no pruning or staking. When grown in some shade and/or in rich soils, however, plants tend to become more open and floppy and often require staking or pruning. For a neater appearance, particularly for shade-grown plants, consider cutting back stems by 1/2 to 1/3 after flowering to promote bushy growth and, if desired, a more rounded foliage mound.

Noteworthy Characteristics

Amsonia tabernaemontana, commonly called bluestar, is an herbaceous perennial which occurs most frequently in rich, open woods and thickets. An erect, clump-forming plant which features terminal, pyramidal clusters of 3/4", soft light blue, star-like flowers in late spring atop erect, leafy stems growing 2-3' tall. Narrow, willow-shaped, dull green foliage may turn an attractive yellow in fall.

Genus name honors 18th-century Virginian physician Dr. Charles Amson.

Specific epithet honours Jakob Theodor von Bergzabern (d. 1590) who Latinized his name as *Tabernaemontanus*.

Problems

No serious insect or disease problems. Rust may occur.

Garden Uses

An easy-to-grow plant which is best massed in informal settings such as native plant gardens, shade gardens or open woodland areas. Also appropriate for borders, containers, good cut flower