

# *Hedychium coronarium* Butterfly Ginger, White Garland-lily, White Gingerlily<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

The butterfly ginger is one of the nicest gingers for the home landscape because its fragrance is so enjoyable. Pure white, showy flowers emerge from one large bud sometimes in late spring through summer at the tip of each unbranched stem. Each flower lasts about one day. Several hundred flowers can appear from each bud during a 6-week period. Each stem grows to about 5 feet tall. These herbaceous perennials spread by underground rhizomes, often forming dense clumps of multiple stems. Large, simple leaves are borne on either side of the thick green stems. Unfortunately, individual flowers do not last after they are cut from the plant.



Figure 1. Flower—*Hedychium coronarium*: Butterfly ginger, white garland-lily, white gingerlily.

Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Fruit—*Hedychium coronarium*: Butterfly ginger, white garland-lily, white gingerlily.

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## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Hedychium coronarium*

**Pronunciation:** hee-DICK-ee-um kor-oh-NAIR-ee-um

**Common name(s):** butterfly ginger, white garland-lily, white gingerlily

**Family:** Zingiberaceae

**Plant type:** herbaceous

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**USDA hardiness zones:** 8B through 11 (Figure 3)

**Planting month for zone 8:** year-round

**Planting month for zone 9:** year-round

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year-round

**Origin:** native to temperate and tropical Asia

**Invasive potential:** not considered a problem species at this time and may be recommended by UF/IFAS faculty (reassess in 10 years)

**Uses:** border; mass planting; suitable for growing indoors

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries



Figure 3. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**Height:** 4 to 5 feet

**Spread:** 4 to 6 feet

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** open

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** coarse

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** undulate

**Leaf shape:** lanceolate; oblong

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 8 to 12 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** white

**Flower characteristic:** pleasant fragrance; summer flowering; fall flowering

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** unknown

**Fruit length:** unknown

**Fruit cover:** unknown

**Fruit color:** unknown

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

**Current year stem/twig color:** green

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** very thick

## Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun

**Soil tolerances:** occasionally wet; acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** unknown

**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

## Other

**Roots:** not applicable

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## Use and Management

Place butterfly ginger near a walk or window so the fragrance can be enjoyed. The foliage texture makes them nicely suited for creating an accent in a shrub border when it is not in flower.

Plants grown in full sun or partial shade flower best. Those in the shade often grow but few flower buds are produced. Rhizomes can be dug any time and divided for propagation.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or disease normally restrict use of this plant in Florida landscapes.