

# *Pachystachys lutea* Golden Shrimp Plant<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

The golden shrimp plant is a colorful, soft-stemmed, tropical shrub typically massed in beds or maintained as a background plant in a mixed perennial planting. This 36 to 48 inch tall, upright perennial has dark green, ovate leaves that are 6 inches long. The showy inflorescence consists of a congested raceme of bright yellow bracts from among which pure white flowers emerge over several weeks. Flowers are displayed above the foliage and contrast nicely with the dark green canopy. New inflorescences are produced throughout the warm months.



Figure 1. Full Form - *Pachystachys lutea*: Golden Shrimp Plant  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Leaf - *Pachystachys lutea*: Golden Shrimp Plant  
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Figure 3. Flower - *Pachystachys lutea*: Golden Shrimp Plant  
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## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Pachystachys lutea*

**Pronunciation:** puh-KISS-tuh-kiss LOO-tee-uh

**Common name(s):** golden shrimp plant, yellow shrimp plant, lollipop-plant

**Family:** *Acanthaceae*

**Plant type:** shrub

**USDA hardiness zones:** 9B through 11 (Figure 4)

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

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

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Uses:** hedge; foundation; border; mass planting

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range



Figure 4. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**Height:** 2 to 3 feet

**Spread:** 2 to 3 feet

**Plant habit:** oval

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** medium

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** undulate

**Leaf shape:** spatulate

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** white

**Flower characteristic:** spring flowering; 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; not particularly showy

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

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** medium

## Culture

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

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

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

## Other

**Roots:** usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

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

**Pest resistance:** very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect plant health or aesthetics

## Use and Management

The golden shrimp plant requires full sun to partial shade and fertile, acidic, well-drained soils. The plant should only be expected to successfully overwinter without damage in zones 10 and 11. In zone 9b, the tops will be killed in a severe freeze, but regrowth should occur from the roots. Elsewhere it can be used as an annual. Even where this perennial remains unscathed by winter frosts, it should be pruned back hard annually to overcome a tendency toward legginess. Plant a low growing ground cover nearby to fill in the lower part of the plant. Golden shrimp plant can be effectively maintained in a container. Regular fertilization during the growing season helps keep foliage green.

Golden shrimp plant is easily propagated from softwood and semi-ripened cuttings and begins to flower when less than 1 foot tall.

## Pests and Diseases

Scales and spider mites may be troublesome pests for the shrimp plant.