

**Hedychium coronarium**

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**Introduction**

The Butterfly Ginger is one of the nicest gingers for the home landscape because its fragrance is so enjoyable (Fig. 1). Pure white, showy flowers emerge from one large bud some time 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.

**General Information**

- **Scientific name:** *Hedychium coronarium*
- **Pronunciation:** hee-DICK-ee-um kor-oh-NAIR-ee-um
- **Common name(s):** Butterfly Ginger
- **Family:** Zinziberaceae
- **Plant type:** herbaceous
- **USDA hardiness zones:** 8B through 11 (Fig. 2)
- **Planting month for zone 8:** year round
- **Planting month for zone 9:** year round
- **Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round
- **Origin:** not native to North America
- **Uses:** border; mass planting; suitable for growing indoors
- **Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

**Description**

- **Height:** 4 to 5 feet
- **Spread:** 4 to 6 feet
- **Plant habit:** upright
- **Plant density:** open
- **Growth rate:** fast
- **Texture:** coarse

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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

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

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

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

**Invasive potential:** aggressive, spreading plant

**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.