

# AMSONIA HUBRICHTII

## 2011 PERENNIAL PLANT OF THE YEAR™

*A Perennial  
for the  
Seasons*



*Other names-*

Amsonia  
Arkansas Blue Star  
Thread Leaf Blue Star

Hardiness  
USDA Zones 4 to 9

Light  
Full sun to partial shade

Soil  
Prefers average, moist well-drained soil but tolerates less moisture. Once established, it can tolerate drier conditions.

### Unique Qualities

Light blue flowers in spring are followed by a marvelous display of foliage in summer. A golden-yellow fall color is second to none among herbaceous perennials. It is uniquely suited as a companion plant or as a feature.

### Uses

This perennial for the seasons is an asset in borders, native gardens, cottage gardens or open woodland areas. It is best when massed. Arkansas blue star is attractive when mixed with ornamental grasses and plants that have attractive seed heads.

# AMSONIA HUBRICHTII

## 2011 PERENNIAL PLANT OF THE YEAR™

*Amsonia hubrichtii* is the Perennial Plant Association's 2011 Perennial Plant of the Year™. *Amsonia hubrichtii*, pronounced am-SO-nee-ah hew-BRIK-tee-eye, carries the common names Arkansas blue star, Arkansas amsonia, thread-leaf blue star, narrow leaf blue star, and Hubricht's blue star. This all-season perennial has blue star-shaped flowers in spring and light green foliage all summer. The foliage turns a beautiful golden-yellow in fall. Arkansas blue star is very soil-adaptive and insects and diseases are rare.

Amsonia, a native of Arkansas and Oklahoma, is a member of the Apocynaceae family. The species was named after Leslie Hubricht who first discovered it growing in Arkansas in 1942. The foliage is finer than a feather duster and leaves reach three inches long. This amsonia grows 36 inches tall and 36 inches wide in a mounded form. From late spring to early summer, two- to three-inch wide clusters of small, light blue, star-shaped flowers are borne above the ferny foliage. The alternate arranged leaves are bright green in spring and summer, but turn a bright yellow-golden color in fall.

*Amsonia hubrichtii* grows best in full sun and partial shade and in well-drained soil. Stems tend to open and flop if plants are grown in too much shade. Once well established, this blue star is drought tolerant and can withstand a season of neglect. The foliage and stems contain a milky sap, which seems to make the plant unappealing to deer. No insect or disease pests are known to attack Arkansas blue star. It is hardy in USDA hardiness zones 4 to 9.

Arkansas blue star is a timeless plant. The foliage in spring and summer is one of the best for contrast with medium to large perennials or shrubs. This blue star adds a billowy, finely-textured feature to the perennial landscape. It grows into a dense mass, very much like a small shrub. The cool blue flowers are useful for toning down adjacent flower colors. The color of the foliage and flowers of blue star blend easily with other plants. Although the delicate light blue spring flowers are the inspiration for its common name, the autumn color of the feathery leaves is a major reason that gardeners grow it. The stunning pale pumpkin color of the foliage creates an excellent combination with purple coneflower, gayfeather, and ornamental grasses. Try a combination of Black Lace elderberry and Arkansas blue star. The brilliant



yellow foliage of amsonia combined with the dark foliage of elderberry is a knockout combination. Arkansas blue star can be used in sunny borders, cottage plantings, native gardens, and in large container plantings. The ornamental qualities and many uses make amsonia an invaluable perennial garden plant. This perennial workhorse provides three splendid seasons of ornamental features.

*Amsonia hubrichtii* may be propagated by seed, division or softwood cuttings. The seeds of this perennial germinate very irregularly over a long period. Softwood cuttings are usually rooted in early summer. The easiest propagation for gardeners is by division in spring.

