**Crape jasmine: Tabernaemontana divaricata**

*Tabernaemontana divaricata* is an evergreen shrub native to India and now cultivated throughout South East Asia and the warmer regions of continental Asia. It belongs to the family Apocynaceae. *Tabernaemontana divaricata* is native to tropical areas of India and is widely grown for its ornamental value in frost free areas around the world. It is grown almost throughout the tropics and subtropics for its attractive and white flowers. The stem of crape jasmine exudes a milky latex when broken, hence the name *milk flower*. It is vernacularly known as East Indian rosebay / Pinwheel flower / Moonbeam (English), Chandini (Hindi), Ananta / Tagar (Konkani / Marathi), Nanthiyar vattam (Malayalam), Nanthiyar vattai (Tamil), Nandi battallu (Kannada), Nandi Vardhanam (Telugu), Sagar (Gujarati), Nandivrksah (Sanskrit). The plant generally grows to a height of 5–6 feet (1.5–1.8 m). The leaves are large, shiny and deep green and are about 15 cm in length and 5.0 cm in width. The (single) flowers have the characteristic 'pinwheel' shape also seen in other genera in the family Apocynaceae such as Vinca and Nerium. Both single and double-flowered forms are cultivated, the flowers of both forms being white. The flowers of the single form are unscented but the double-flowered form has a pleasing fragrance. Crape jasmine blooms in spring but flowers appear sporadically almost throughout the year. The waxy blossoms are white five-petalled pinwheels that are borne in small clusters on the stem tips.

**Propagation**

*Tabernaemontana* can be grown from layers or stem cuttings.

**Soil and Climate**

*Tabernaemontana coronaria* does not require much care. It prefers well drained sandy loam soil with acidic to neutral pH. It grows well at sunny locations in tropical and sub-tropical climates (plants in bright sunlight produces more blooms) where it receives moderate water throughout the year. Prune lightly as required to maintain a proper size and shape.

**Uses**

Flowers are commonly used for *Pooja* in north and south India. It is an excellent evergreen and ornamental bush for lawns and gardens. Abundance of dazzling white flowers justifies the name ‘Moonbeam’ – the amazing beauty of its small white flowers under moonlight.