

## Liatris spicata 'Alba' Alba Blazing Star

Liatris spicata 'Alba' (Alba Blazing Star) is a 4-season flowering perennial that provides delicate, vertical punctuation in the garden. In spring, bright green, grass-like foliage emerges from cold soil. By summer, this 3-4' tall, upright, clump-forming plant reaches to the sky with spikes of densely packed, white, feathery flowers. These narrow plumes perch above fine, grass-like foliage that whorls around the stem, becoming shorter in length the higher it climbs. From July through August, a slow succession of blooming occurs, beginning with flowers at the top of the plant, and progressing downward. Flower spikes are excellent for cutting. This plant provides a fine, delicate texture and brings good vertical presence. It provides resources to a wide variety of pollinators, including butterflies, birds, and hummingbirds, yet is unpalatable to deer. In the fall, flowers transform into bottle brushes of densely-packed, tan, feathery seeds, creating visual and structural winter interest. Plant Alba Blazing Star in full sun and well-drained, medium to wet soils. It can tolerate drought and almost any soil type, but prefers acidic soils.

**Botanical Name:** Liatris spicata 'Alba'

**Common Name:** Alba Blazing Star

**Family:** Asteraceae

**Nativity:** Great Lakes Native

**USDA Zone:** 3 to 8

**Light Type:** Full sun

**Soil Type:** Clay, Loam, Sand

**Soil Preferences:** Prefers well-drained, acidic soil, but otherwise is adaptable

**Soil Moisture:** Moist, Wet

**Typical height (ft):** 3'-4'

**Typical width (ft):** 1-1.5'

**Foliage:** Bright green

**Bloom Time:** July, August

**Bloom:** White

**Ecological features:** Provides floral resources for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinators; seeds attract small songbirds in fall and winter.

**Tolerance of:** Deer, Drought, Heat

**Additional notes:** Provides a vertical accent in the garden; flower spikes are unusual in that they open from the top down

**Companion plants:** Canada anemone (*Anemone canadensis*), New England Aster (*Aster novae-angliae*), Swamp Aster (*Aster puniceus*), Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), Hyssopleaf Thoroughwort (*Eupatorium hyssopifolium*), Sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*), False Sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*)

**For more information see:**

[https://plants.gertens.com/12070009/Plant/16599/White\\_Blazing\\_Star](https://plants.gertens.com/12070009/Plant/16599/White_Blazing_Star)

<https://www.gardenia.net/plant/liatris-spicata-alba>

[http://www.hoffienursery.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/plants.plantDetail/plant\\_id/389/index.htm](http://www.hoffienursery.com/index.cfm/fuseaction/plants.plantDetail/plant_id/389/index.htm)

<https://www.lurigarden.org/plants/blazing-star-alba/>

<https://wimastergardener.org/article/liatris/>

**Images of Liatris spicata 'Alba':**



blazing-star-white-Lurie-Garden-7.2016.png

feather white flower spikes in urban context (Lurie garden)



Liatris-Spicata-Alba-1\_medium.Jpg

fluffy vertical flower spikes contrasting with a lush, finely textured, grassy foliage



Liatris-Spicata-Corm\_medium.jpg

Bulb of Liatris spicata 'Alba'



Liatris\_Alba.SHUT\_1024x.jpg

narrow grass-like foliage which whorls around the stem



Liatris\_spicata\_fruits.jpg

Bottlebrush seed heads

**Image choices for narrative:**

Choice 1

Liatriis-Spicata-Alba-1\_medium.jpg

fluffy vertical flower spikes contrasting with a lush, finely textured, grassy foliage

Choice2

Liatriis\_spicata\_fruits.jpg

Bottlebrush seed heads