



# Gausáli

## *Bikkia tetrandra*

### Native Plants of Guam

**G**ausáli is a shrub that is endemic to Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. It is usually found growing on limestone cliff faces close to the ocean.

**Other Common Names:** Torch wood, Sialetafa (Tonga)

**Synonyms:** *Bikkia australis*, *Bikkia australis* var. *commersoniana*, *Bikkia australis* var. *fosteriana*, *Bikkia comptonii*, *Bikkia forsteriana*, *Bikkia grandiflora*, *Bikkia hombroniana*, *Bikkia mariannensis*, *Bikkiopsis comptonii*, *Cormigonus tetrandus*, *Hoffmannia amicorum*, *Petesia carnosa*, *Portlandia tetrandra*

**Family Name:** Rubiaceae

#### Plant Appearance

**Distinctive feature:** Its attractive flowers have been nominated to be the Territorial Flower of Guam.

#### Leaf

**Shape:** Obovate, entire, and petiolate

**Arrangement:** Opposite

**Type:** Simple

#### Flower

**Size:** 2-2.5 in.

**Color:** White

**Shape:** The flowers are shaped like trumpets with square bells.

**Arrangement:** The flowers are square in cross section and petals occur two to three together in leaf axils.

**Flowering period:** Year-round

#### Habit

**Typical height:** Up to 10 ft.

#### Fruit

**Type:** The fruit is a fibrous, woody two-celled capsule (dehiscent).

**Size:** About 1 in., elongated



Gausáli flowers<sup>a</sup>.



Gausáli leaves<sup>a</sup>.



Gausáli fruit<sup>a</sup>.



Gausáli seeds<sup>b</sup>.



Gausáli seedling<sup>a</sup>.

**Color:** Dark brown

**Number of seeds:** 100+ tiny seeds

**Edible:** Not edible

## Growing Your Own

### PROPAGATION

**Form:** Seeds

**Seed collection:** When collecting seeds, select mature capsules that have not split open.

**Seed treatment:** None

**Germination time:** Germination occurs within 3-4 weeks. Seeds may be started in trays. When seedlings are an inch high, they should be transplanted into individual containers.

**Planting depth:** Scatter seeds on the soil surface and do not cover with soil.

**Pre-planting:** The seedlings can be transplanted after 6-8 months of growing in pots.

**Pollinators:** Insects

## Production Conditions

**pH value:** 7.6-8.5+

**Water:** Low

**Salt tolerance:** High

**Wind tolerance:** High

**Soil characteristics:** Crushed limestone

**Light:** New seedlings should be in a shaded area. As they grow, they can be exposed to brighter light.

**Growth rate:** 1-3 ft. per year

**Growth direction:** This plant grows in an upright direction.

**Fertilizer:** Mix a thin layer of moist, soilless potting mix or peat moss over the top of crushed limestone.

**Pruning:** Regular pruning of outside branches can be done for ornamental use.

## Risks

**Near surface roots:** None

**Limb breakage:** Low

**Pests:** Unknown

## How to Use This Plant

Gausàli is a coastal shrub that is easy to care for.

**Agroforestry:** Informal hedge, ornamental, erosion control

**Wildlife:** None

**Other uses:** The stems can be used to make torches or candles and the flowers are used for garlands.

## References and Resources

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### Photo Credits

- Christine Bucayu-Laurent
- Forestry & Soil Resources Division, Guam Department of Agriculture

### Contributors

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### Acknowledgements

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### Notes

This publication is an update of: Devin Frazier and Thera Santos. 2006. *Gausali*. Guam Department of Agriculture. 2pp.

### For Further Information

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