



The **ARNOLD**  
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## *Heptacodium miconioides* ‘SMNHMRF’ (Temple of Bloom™ seven-son flower) Zones 5-9

Temple of Bloom™ seven-son flower is long awaited new release from Proven Winners. This variety has retained all the outstanding characteristics of the original Arnold Arboretum favorite but has added value—it is earlier blooming and compact. If you enter the Arboretum through the Centre Street Gate, you may have encountered the first cultivated introduction of seven-son flower in North America.

Stephen Spongberg—then Arboretum horticultural taxonomist and editor of *Arnoldia*—obtained seven-son flower seed from Hangzhou Botanical Garden in China during the 1980 Sino-American Expedition. The Arboretum distributed stem cuttings from these seedlings throughout North America in 1986. However, *Heptacodium* had been introduced to the West over 70 years earlier as pressed herbarium sheets collected by plant explorer Ernest Henry Wilson in 1907. Its common name, seven-son flower, was coined by Arboretum taxonomist Alfred Rehder to describe its inflorescence: six, delightfully perfumed, white blossoms borne in whorled 6-inch-long panicles, terminated by a seventh flower.

Blooming in early fall, seven-son flower is at its peak beauty and fragrance when other plants are fading into the background. Flowers give way to extremely showy, vibrant-red sepals that persist through fall and somehow exceed the beauty of the inflorescences. Temple of Bloom™ flowers before the straight species, which means its spectacular sepals may be enjoyed even earlier. With its shorter stature—6 to 10 feet compared to 25 feet for the straight species—Temple of Bloom™ is versatile in the garden. This shrub exhibits an open growth habit, with grayish-brown outer bark that exfoliates to reveal a lighter inner bark. Seven-son flower thrives in sun to light shade, with best flowering occurring in full sun and well-drained soil.

### **Planting Instructions**

Carefully unpack your plant and choose a location that is partially shaded and protected from foot traffic and the potential for accidental breakage until you are ready to plant. Check it for watering needs daily, as containerized plants dry out quickly.

Plant in well-drained soil at the correct depth. The top of the root system should be level with the soil surface. The depth of the hole should accommodate the height of the roots and be left undisturbed to prevent settling, while the width of the hole should be at least two times the width of the root ball. This loosened soil will allow new roots to grow more quickly. After planting, water your shrub well and apply a 1” layer of mulch over the area, but do not allow mulch to contact the stem to reduce the likelihood of rot. Water again after mulching and continue to water (but not saturate) until established.