



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Myrciaria cauliflora*¹

Edward F. Gilman²

Introduction

It would be hard to find a more attractive trunk and bark on a small tropical tree. Flowers are borne directly on the smooth, brown bark and are followed by the delicious black fruit. Fruit matures about 3 weeks after flowers emerge. Trees often flower and fruit 5 or more times during the year. Several to many trunks originate from near the ground and slowly ascend in a spreading fashion. The rounded canopy that forms is displayed in a vase shape if some of the lower branches are removed from the tree. The tree grows slowly, but it is well worth the wait for the ornamental and food value gained from this wonderful plant.

General Information

Scientific name: *Myrciaria cauliflora*

Pronunciation: mer-see-AIR-ree-uh kaw-liff-FLOR-ruh

Common name(s): Jaboticaba

Family: *Myrtaceae*

Plant type: tree

USDA hardiness zones: 10B through 11 (Fig. 1)

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: near a deck or patio; espalier

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 12 to 20 feet

Spread: 12 to 18 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: pinnate; reticulate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: white

Flower characteristic: flowers periodically throughout the year

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit cover: fleshy

Fruit color: black

Fruit characteristic: suited for human consumption

Trunk and Branches

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-419, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October, 1999 Please visit the EDIS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. For information on obtaining other extension publications, contact your county Cooperative Extension Service office. Florida Cooperative Extension Service / Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences / University of Florida / Christine Taylor Waddill, Dean



Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; showy

Current year stem/twig color: brown

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay;

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

Place this tree in a conspicuous location such as near an entrance, next to a deck or patio or along a walk so it can be enjoyed year round. This remarkable small tree will reap you compliments from friends and passers-by for as long as you have it in the yard. Maintain the area beneath the canopy in a low ground cover or mulch to display the trunk clearly to the ground. This will also allow for easy access to the fruit.

A full sun location is preferable but adequate growth can be maintained in partial shade with direct sun for part of the day. Jaboticaba appears to tolerate a wide range of soil pH and is not picky with regards to soil texture, as long as it drains well.

Pests and Diseases

There do not appear to be significant pest or diseases problems on Jaboticaba.