Jamaican Caper

Capparis cynophallophora

Height: 18 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 10

Other Names: Mustard Tree, syn. Quadrella jamaicensis

Description:

A unique large shrub or small tree with an upright to spreading habit and attractive, shiny dark green leaves; wonderfully fragrant white blooms turn pink within hours of opening; brown seed pods open revealing scarlet interior; capers not edible



Jamaican Caper
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Jamaican Caper features dainty clusters of fragrant white spider-like flowers with pink overtones at the ends of the branches from early spring to late summer. It has dark green evergreen foliage which emerges coppery-bronze in spring. The glossy oval leaves remain dark green throughout the winter. It produces tan capsules from early fall to early winter, which fade to scarlet over time.



Jamaican Caper foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Jamaican Caper is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance shrub, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting bees, butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

Jamaican Caper is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Hedges/Screening
- General Garden Use
- Windbreaks and Shelterbelts
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

Jamaican Caper will grow to be about 18 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. To help this plant achive its best flowering performance, periodically apply a flower-boosting fertilizer from early spring through into the active growing season. It is not particular as to soil type or pH, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America..