Guayacan

Guaiacum coulteri



Guayacan
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 12 feet

Spread: 12 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Pockwood, Sonora Guaiacum, Wood Of Life

Description:

A very slow growing, multi-stemmed, broadleaf evergreen shrub or small tree that is great for dry, coastal areas; primarily blooms in mid-spring with sporadic blooming in summer; an excellent border or container plant

Ornamental Features

Guayacan is bathed in stunning clusters of blue star-shaped flowers with violet overtones and buttery yellow anthers along the branches from mid spring to late summer. It features abundant showy cherry red capsules from late summer to early winter, which fade to brick red over time. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. It has grayish green evergreen foliage which emerges chartreuse in spring. The small oval leaves remain grayish green throughout the winter. The rough brown bark and gray branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.



Guayacan foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Guayacan is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, 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 and butterflies to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Guayacan is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Hedges/Screening
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Guayacan will grow to be about 12 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 12 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 to a ripe old age of 500 years or more; think of this as a heritage shrub for future generations!

This shrub should only be grown in full sunlight. 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. This plant should not require much in the way of fertilizing once established, although it may appreciate a shot of general-purpose fertilizer from time to time early in the growing season. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in sandy soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America.

Guayacan makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use in outdoor pots and containers. Its large size and upright habit of growth lend it for use as a solitary accent, or in a composition surrounded by smaller plants around the base and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.