

# Canella winterana Winter Cinnamon, Wild Cinnamon<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Wild Cinnamon is a salt tolerant large evergreen shrub or small tree native of Florida and tropical America. Purple and white showy flowers cover the tree in summer and fall followed by bright red berries clustered near the tips of branches. Thick, obovate to spatulate shaped leaves fill the dense canopy with a medium- to olive-green color. The trunk grows straight up the center of the canopy and develops thin branches that grow to no more than about 4 feet long.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Canella winterana*

**Pronunciation:** kuh-NEL-luh win-tur-AY-nuh

**Common name(s):** Winter Cinnamon, Wild Cinnamon

**Family:** *Canellaceae*

**Plant type:** tree

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

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** native to Florida

**Uses:** hedge; espalier; narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; screen; small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size);

medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size)  
**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

## Description

**Height:** 20 to 30 feet

**Spread:** 6 to 8 feet



Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Plant habit:** columnar

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** medium

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite

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**Leaf type:** simple  
**Leaf margin:** entire  
**Leaf shape:** obovate  
**Leaf venation:** none, or difficult to see  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no fall color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** white  
**Flower characteristic:** summer flowering; fall flowering

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch  
**Fruit cover:** fleshy  
**Fruit color:** green  
**Fruit characteristic:** attracts birds

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** no thorns  
**Current year stem/twig color:** green  
**Current year stem/twig thickness:** thick

## Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun  
**Soil tolerances:** alkaline; sand; loam; acidic  
**Drought tolerance:** high  
**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:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

## Use and Management

Wild Cinnamon can be used as a specimen planted alone in the landscape as a small tree. They can be trained with several stems reaching up into the canopy, or left to grow with one trunk as seen in the wild. The rich, dense foliage creates a cooling shade beneath the tree and makes this a good native plant for locating near patios and decks for large and small residences alike. Plant them in a row spaced 10 feet apart along an entrance to a subdivision, mall or

commercial landscape for a dramatic impact. The narrow canopy makes it a good candidate for a clipped or unclipped screen along a property line. A number of nurseries offer this wonderful plant for sale.

Best growth and flowering occur in the full sun on a relatively well-drained site. The tree tolerates alkaline soils well. It is an endangered plant in Florida.

## Pests and Diseases

No serious pests or diseases bother this plant.