

Chiococca pinetorum Pineland Snowberry¹

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Introduction

Chiococca pinetorum is a handsome, low scrambling shrub that can reach a height of 10 feet if given a support to climb upon (Fig. 1). It climbs into neighboring trees and shrubs in the wild. The leathery leaves of the Snowberry are evergreen, shiny, and dark green in color. They are smaller than *C. alba*. White or purple-white, tubular flowers are found in the leaf axil and occur in 3-inch-long racemes or panicles. Each raceme or panicle is tipped with 6 to 8 of the flowers, and these flowers turn from white to yellow with time. The common name used for this shrub refers to the large, ovoid, sparkling white fruits that follow the delightful flowers.

General Information

Scientific name: *Chiococca pinetorum*

Pronunciation: kye-oh-KOE-kuh pye-net-TOR-um

Common name(s): Pineland Snowberry

Family: *Rubiaceae*

Plant type: ground cover

USDA hardiness zones: 10B through 11 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: espalier; mass planting; foundation; ground cover

Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

Description

Height: 2 to 3 feet

Spread: 3 to 6 feet

Plant habit: spreading; round

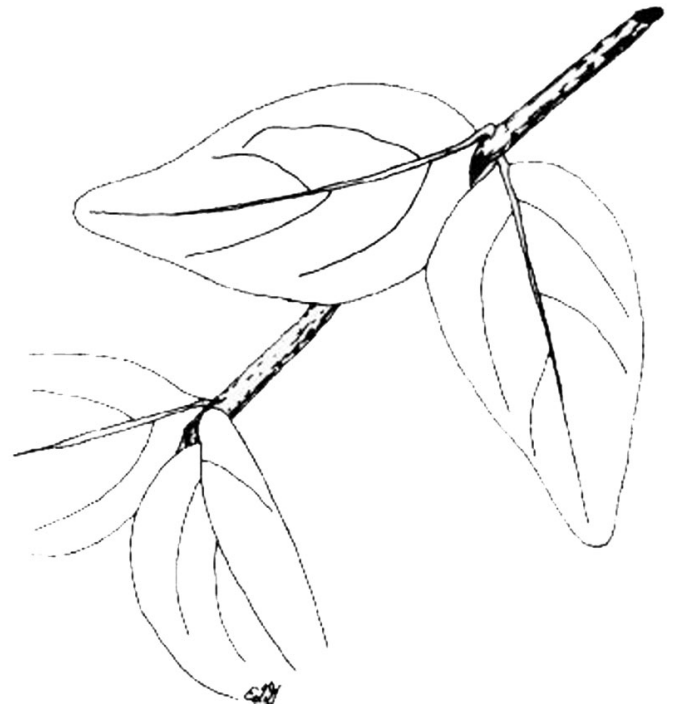


Figure 1. Pineland Snowberry.

Plant density: open

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: ovate

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf venation: pinnate

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;white- purple

Flower characteristic: flowers periodically throughout the year

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: less than .5 inch

Fruit cover: fleshy

Fruit color: white

Fruit characteristic: attracts birds

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; not particularly showy

Current year stem/twig color: green

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: acidic; alkaline; sand; loam;

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

This plant may be used as a tall ground cover in a partially shaded or sunny location. Plants blend together making a loose mass of foliage several years after planting on 4- to 5-foot centers.

The Snowberry is a shrub that needs a well-drained soil. It will grow well on sandy loam soils and can tolerate dry conditions. This plant can be found near coastal areas throughout Florida and will usually survive without care once it becomes established.

Chewing insects may occasionally be a problem for *Chio-cocca alba*