

Dracaena marginata Red-edged Dracaena, Madagascar Dragon Tree¹

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Introduction

Multiple thin, curving stalks with narrow ribbon-like, green leaves edged in purplish-red distinguish this dracaena from its multitude of cousins (Fig. 1). The upright, unbranched stems form a delicate, somewhat abstract silhouette, perfect for accent planting or for low-maintenance container culture as a houseplant or outdoors. It is a fine specimen to silhouette against a wall at night with uplighting.

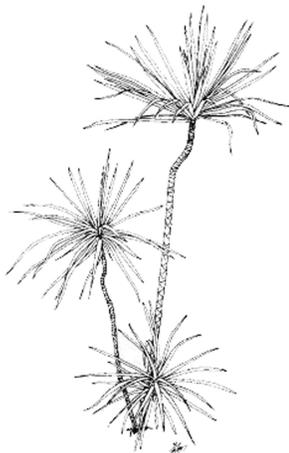


Figure 1. Red-edged dracaena.

General Information

Scientific name: *Dracaena marginata*

Pronunciation: druh-SEE-nuh mar-jin-NAY-tuh

Common name(s): red-edged dracaena, Madagascar dragon tree

Family: *Agavaceae*

Plant type: shrub

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

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: container or above-ground planter; border; suitable for growing indoors; accent

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Description

Height: 8 to 15 feet

Spread: 3 to 8 feet

Plant habit: upright

Plant density: open

Growth rate: slow

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Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: spiral

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: linear

Leaf venation: parallel

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 18 to 36 inches

Leaf color: variegated; purple or red

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

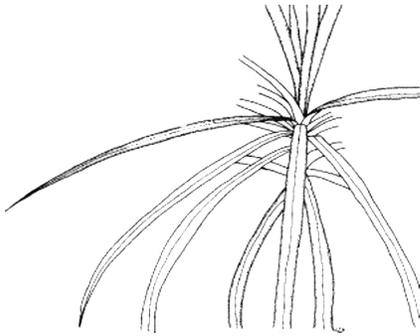


Figure 3. Foliage of red-edged dracaena.

Flower

Flower color: white

Flower characteristic: summer flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: less than .5 inch

Fruit cover: fleshy

Fruit color: unknown

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

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

Current year stem/twig color: reddish

Current year stem/twig thickness: very thick

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

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

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerances: poor

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: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

Dracaena grows in shade or sun and is tolerant of drought and a wide variety of soil types, though preferring an organic soil with plenty of moisture. Two or more branches form after pruning a stem. This technique can be used to increase the density of the plant. This can be beneficial since lower leaves drop from the stems as the plant grows taller leaving the bottom of the plant bare.

Propagation is by tip cuttings. The foliage of the cultivar 'Tricolor' is more colorful than the species, appearing almost white from as distance.

Pests and Diseases

Mites, thrips, and chewing insects are a problem.

Dracaenas are susceptible to leaf spot diseases.