

***Cassia fistula*: Golden-Shower¹**

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Introduction

Golden-Shower is a fast-growing tree which reaches 30 to 40 feet in height and 30 to 40 feet wide. The well-spaced branches are clothed with pinnately compound leaves, with leaflets up to eight inches long and 2.5 inches wide. These leaves will drop from the tree for a short period of time and are quickly replaced by new leaves. In summer, Golden-Shower is decorated with thick clusters of showy yellow blooms which cover the slightly drooping branches. The blooms are followed by the production of two-foot-long, dark brown, cylindrical seedpods which persist on the tree throughout the winter before falling to litter the ground. The seeds contained within are poisonous.

General Information

Scientific name: *Cassia fistula*

Pronunciation: KASS-ee-uh FIST-yoo-luh

Common name(s): Golden-Shower

Family: *Leguminosae*

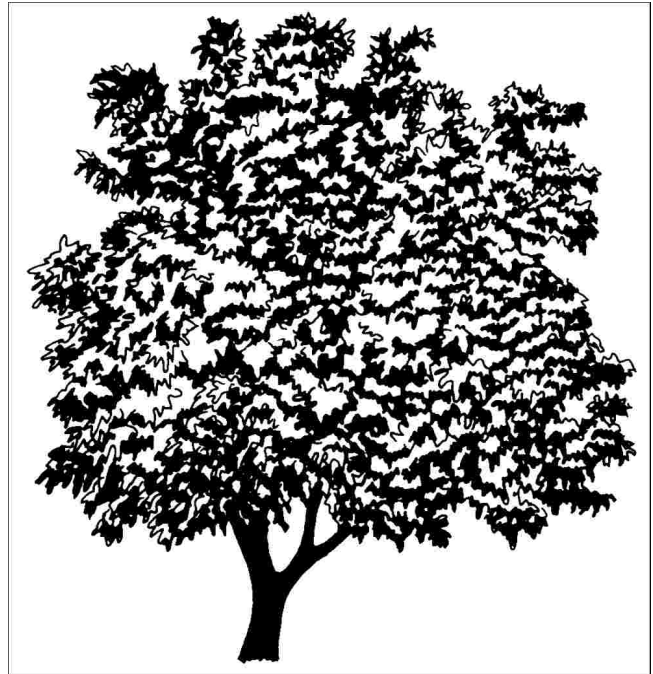


Figure 1. Middle-aged *Cassia fistula*: Golden-Shower

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

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: has been evaluated using the IFAS Assessment of the Status of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas (Fox et al. 2005). This

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species is not documented in any undisturbed natural areas in Florida. Thus, it is not considered a problem species and may be used in Florida.

Uses: street without sidewalk; shade; specimen; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; parking lot island 100-200 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: even-pinnately compound



Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 30 to 40 feet

Spread: 30 to 40 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular

Crown shape: vase, oval, upright/erect

Leaf margin: entire, undulate

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow

Flower characteristics: very showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: pod or pod-like, elongated

Fruit length: 12 inches or more

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: purple

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches droop; not showy; typically one trunk; thorns

Pruning requirement: needed for strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown

Current year twig thickness: thick

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; alkaline; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: unknown

Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

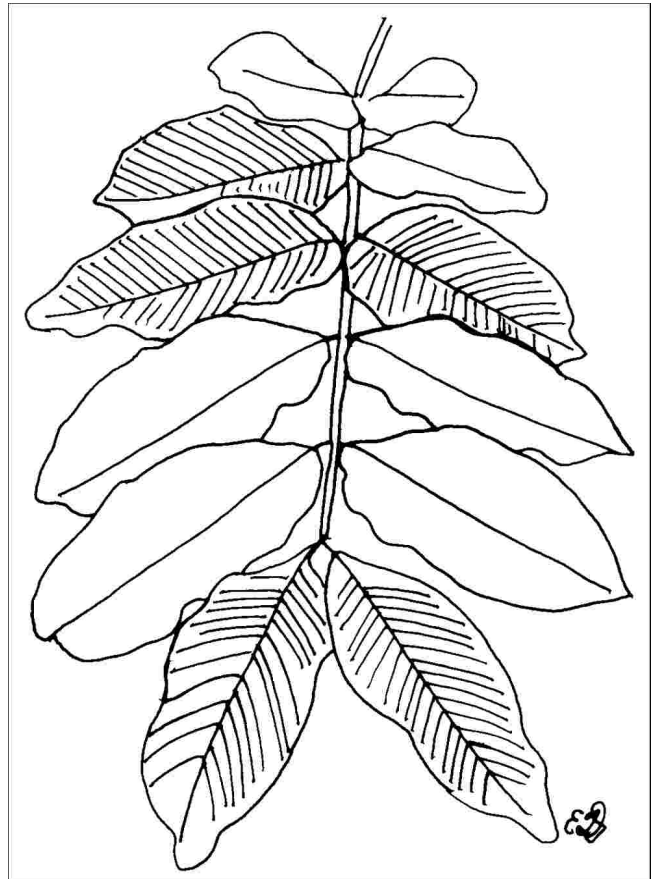


Figure 3. Foliage

Use and Management

Golden-Shower is ideal for use as a specimen planting. It can look a bit coarse and unkempt for short periods when the leaves drop but the vibrant flower display more than makes up for this. Some communities have planted this as a street tree where it has held up quite well.

Golden-Shower should be grown in full sun on well-drained soil. The trees are moderately drought- and salt-tolerant. Although Golden-Shower is damaged by temperatures falling slightly below freezing, it will come back with warmer weather. Trees will need occasionally pruning when they are

young to control shape and develop a uniform crown. Young trees can grow asymmetrical with branches often drooping toward the ground. Staking and proper pruning will help develop a well shaped and structured crown.

Propagation is by seeds (which are poisonous).

Pests

No pests are of major concern but occasionally bothered by caterpillars.

Diseases

Mildew, leaf spot, root rot diseases.

Literature Cited

Fox, A.M., D.R. Gordon, J.A. Dusky, L. Tyson, and R.K. Stocker (2005) IFAS Assessment of the Status of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas. Cited from the Internet (November 3, 2006), <http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/assessment.html>