**Cornus walteri: Walter Dogwood**

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**Introduction**

Walter Dogwood is a medium-sized deciduous tree reaching 30 to 40 feet in height and width. The two to five-inch-long leaves are dark green and are joined in June by the small white flowers arranged in two to three-inch diameter cymes. The blossoms are followed by the production of small black fruits which are popular with birds and other wildlife. Walter Dogwood is probably best known for the alligator-like bark on older specimens, even more so than Flowering Dogwood. Young specimens have an upright branching habit giving way to an open spreading habit. The branches probably droop less than most other Dogwoods, making it a possible candidate for street tree use although they have not been tested for this in the United States. Most certainly a good patio tree providing shade quickly.

**General Information**

- **Scientific name:** *Cornus walteri*
- **Pronunciation:** KOR-nus WALL-ter-eye
- **Common name(s):** Walter Dogwood
- **Family:** Cornaceae
- **USDA hardiness zones:** 5A through 8A (Fig. 2)
- **Origin:** not native to North America
- **Invasive potential:** little invasive potential
- **Uses:** shade; street without sidewalk; deck or patio
- **Availability:** not native to North America

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Figure 1. Mature *Cornus walteri*: Walter Dogwood  
Credits: Ed Gilman

Figure 2. Range
**Description**

**Height:** 30 to 40 feet  
**Spread:** 30 to 40 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical  
**Crown shape:** vase  
**Crown density:** moderate  
**Growth rate:** fast  
**Texture:** medium

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)  
**Leaf type:** simple  
**Leaf margin:** serrate, serrulate  
**Leaf shape:** ovate  
**Leaf venation:** pinnate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous  
**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches, 4 to 8 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** red  
**Fall characteristic:** showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** white/cream/gray  
**Flower characteristics:** showy

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** round  
**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch  
**Fruit covering:** fleshy  
**Fruit color:** black  
**Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches don’t droop; showy; typically one trunk; thorns  
**Pruning requirement:** little required  
**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** green  
**Current year twig thickness:** medium  
**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun or partial shade  
**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; acidic; slightly alkaline; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** high  
**Aerosol salt tolerance:** unknown

**Other**

**Roots:** not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no  
**Outstanding tree:** no  
**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown  
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant  
**Pest resistance:** resistant to pests/diseases

**Use and Management**

Grown in the full sun it develops a dense canopy but is more open and perhaps more attractive in partial shade. The plant is now rare in the industry but deserves to be tried. It is highly drought tolerant and grows well in clay soil.

Propagation is by cuttings or seed.

**Pests**

No pests are of major concern at this time.

**Diseases**

Possibly leaf spot, twig blight, or canker. See diseases section of Flowering Dogwood.