

Cupaniopsis anacardiopsis: Carrotwood¹

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Introduction

This compact, single-trunked, evergreen tree has four-inch-long, glossy, dark green, divided leaflets and makes an ideal shade, specimen, patio or poolside tree. It is popular in many yards and is used as a small to medium-sized street tree spaced about 20 feet apart. The insignificant small lime-green flowers are followed by 1/2-inch diameter, green fruits which split open to reveal seeds but do not squash or stain. The seeds germinate in the landscape and may be a litter problem. There have been some reports of carrotwood becoming invasive along coastal islands of Florida so use caution in planting in these areas. In addition, the seeds may be disseminated by birds which would make it easy for the tree to spread rapidly into native hammocks.

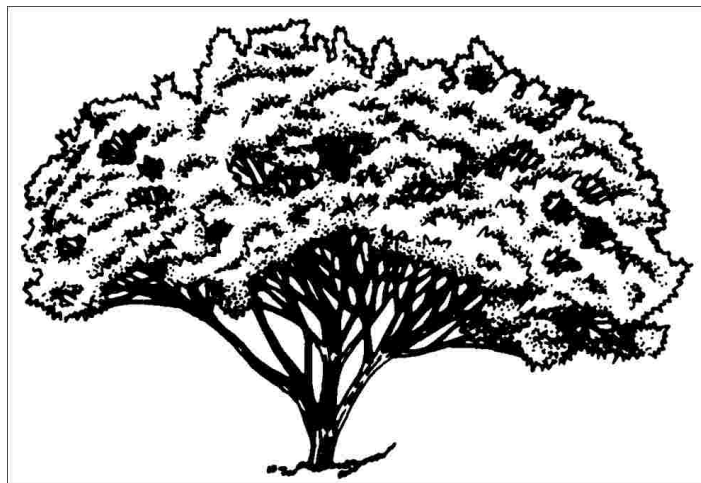


Figure 1. Mature *Cupaniopsis anacardiopsis*: Carrotwood

General Information

Scientific name: *Cupaniopsis anacardiopsis*

Pronunciation: koo-pan-nee-OP-sis
an-nuh-kar-dee-OP-sis

Common name(s): Carrotwood

Family: *Sapindaceae*

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

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: According to the IFAS Assessment of the Status of Non-Native Plants in Floridas Natural Areas (Fox *et al.* 2005), *Cupaniopsis anacardiodes* (carrotwood) is prohibited for use in Florida.

Uses:

Availability: not native to North America



Figure 2. Range

1. This document is ENH380, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date November 1993. Revised April 2007. Reviewed May 2011. Visit the EDIS website at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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Description

Height: 25 to 35 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: round

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: odd-pinnately compound

Leaf margin: entire, undulate

Leaf shape: oblong, elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: green

Flower characteristics: not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round, irregular

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: green, orange

Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; not showy; fruit/leaves a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches don't droop; 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; occasionally wet; well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: high

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: yes

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible

Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

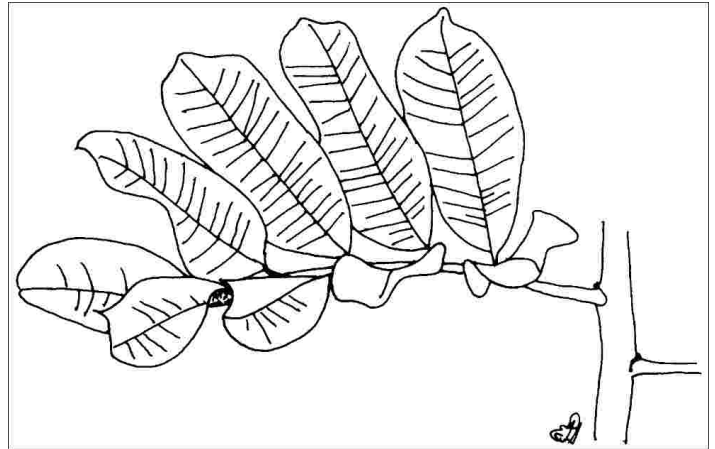


Figure 3. Foliage

Use and Management

Carrotwood tolerates poor, dry or wet soils, full sun, and hot, salty winds. It is truly a durable, urban-tolerant tree, able to grow even in confined planting pits in downtown sidewalks. Perhaps it is best used in these areas. It is deep-rooting on well-drained soils and will tolerate drought. Selected, upright branches in the crown can be removed to allow for more light penetration and better turf growth under the crown. If not, the dense canopy will shade out all but the most shade-tolerant plants. The wood is bright apricot-colored in cross-section, and resists breakage because it is hard. If you cut one down, save the wood. Wood-workers enjoy turning it on a lathe and making spindles and bowls.

Propagation is by seed.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern. Warning: Use with caution since the tree has become invasive in south Florida. Commonly used as a street tree in southern California.