**Pinckneya pubens: Pinckneya**¹
Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson²

**Introduction**
In earlier days, malaria and other fevers were treated at home with a medicine made from the inner bark of this deciduous, 30-foot-tall, North American native tree, giving it the common name “Fevertree.” The tree is also referred to as *Pinckneya bractea*. The tree is more commonly seen at 15 to 20 feet tall by 15 feet wide as an open-grown landscape tree. The large, dark green leaves, five to eight inches long and three to four inches wide, have a lighter underside and are covered with a light fuzz when young. The clusters of yellowish-green, 2.5-inch-long tubular flowers are made more conspicuous by the cream to bright rose-colored, petal-like sepals, making Fevertree quite spectacular when it is in full bloom in early summer. The brown, spotted, round seed capsules which follow stay on the trees throughout the winter.

**General Information**
- **Scientific name:** Pinckneya pubens
- **Pronunciation:** PINK-nee-uh PEW-benz
- **Common name(s):** Pinckneya, Fevertree
- **Family:** Rubiaceae
- **USDA hardiness zones:** 7B through 9B (Fig. 2)
- **Origin:** native to North America
- **Invasive potential:** little invasive potential
- **Uses:** specimen; deck or patio; container or planter
- **Availability:** not native to North America

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**Description**

Height: 15 to 20 feet  
Spread: 12 to 18 feet  
Crown uniformity: irregular  
Crown shape: round  
Crown density: open  
Growth rate: moderate  
Texture: coarse

**Foliage**

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)  
Leaf type: simple  
Leaf margin: entire  
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval), oblong  
Leaf venation: pinnate, reticulate  
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous  
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches  
Leaf color: green  
Fall color: no color change  
Fall characteristic: not showy

![Figure 3. Foliage](image)

**Flower**

Flower color: yellow, pink  
Flower characteristics: very showy

**Fruit**

Fruit shape: round  
Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch  
Fruit covering: dry or hard  
Fruit color: brown  
Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

**Culture**

Light requirement: full sun, partial sun or partial shade  
Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; acidic; extended flooding; well-drained  
Drought tolerance: moderate  
Aerosol salt tolerance: unknown

**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

**Use and Management**

The unusual, open, coarse habit of growth and showy flowers make this a conversation piece in any yard. Use it as an accent in a sunny shrub border or as a specimen near the patio or deck. This is certainly a tree to consider when planning a yard due to the small size and pest resistance.

Found in its native habitat on poorly drained land or along swamp-margins, Fevertree should only be planted on moist soils or those areas which are flooded with rains periodically throughout the year. Although best flowering appears to be in full sun, trees grown in partial shade will grow but flower poorly. Not for a landscape unless it is occasionally irrigated during dry summers.

Propagation is by seed or division of the many root-suckers.

**Pests and Diseases**

No pests or diseases are of major concern.