

# *Terminalia muelleri*: Muellers Terminalia<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

This is a small, 30-foot-tall, deciduous tree which forms a symmetrical, horizontally-layered silhouette from an arrow-straight trunk. The leathery, four-inch-long leaves turn attractively red in autumn and winter before dropping. In spring, the trees are decorated with spikes of tiny greenish-white blossoms which are followed by dark blue, small fruits. This tree is probably well suited for a street tree and other urban planting sites where a small tree is needed. It would also make a nice addition to the small residential lot as a specimen tree or small shade tree for a patio or deck.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Terminalia muelleri*

**Pronunciation:** ter-mih-NAIL-ee-uh MULL-er-eye

**Common name(s):** Muellers Terminalia

**Family:** *Combretaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10B 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 Florida's Natural Areas (Fox *et al.* 2005), *Terminalia muelleri* (Muellers tropical-almond) may be used with caution in the central and southern zones of Florida, but should be managed to prevent its escape (counties are listed by zone at: <http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/assessment>); and is not considered a problem species and may be used in north Florida.



Figure 1. Middle-aged *Terminalia muelleri*: Muellers Terminalia

**Uses:** sidewalk cutout (tree pit); tree lawn 3-4 feet wide; tree lawn 4-6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; deck or patio; specimen; highway median

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

## Description

**Height:** 30 to 35 feet

**Spread:** 15 to 25 feet

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Figure 2. Range

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical

**Crown shape:** vase

**Crown density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** medium

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** obovate

**Leaf venation:** reticulate

**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** red

**Fall characteristic:** showy

## Flower

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

**Flower characteristics:** showy

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** .5 to 1 inch

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** blue

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

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** branches don't droop; not showy;  
typically one trunk; thorns

**Pruning requirement:** little required

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** green

**Current year twig thickness:** thin

**Wood specific gravity:** unknown

## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun

**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; slightly 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

## Use and Management

*Terminalia muelleri* should be grown in full sun on any well-drained soil, tolerating acid, alkaline, and even salt, and are very wind-resistant. Trees should be planted where they can be protected from frost.

Propagation is by seed.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.