Caesalpinia granadillo: Bridalveil Tree

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Introduction
Bridalveil tree makes a wonderful shade tree, the 35-foot-high tree clothed with finely textured, pinnately compound, evergreen leaves. In summer and fall, bridalveil tree is decorated with showy yellow blossoms. The bark is also quite striking, peeling off in thin strips showing an unusual green and grey mottling. The tree is usually found growing with several trunks originating from the lower four feet of the tree. This feature, along with the unusual bark traits, make this a highly desirable tree for planting in almost any landscape.

General Information
Scientific name: Caesalpinia granadillo
Pronunciation: sez-al-PIN-ee-uh gran-uh-DILL-oh
Common name(s): Bridalveil tree
Family: Leguminosae
USDA hardiness zones: 10B through 11 (Fig. 2)
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: sidewalk cutout (tree pit); specimen; street without sidewalk; parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot island 100–200 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; tree lawn 3–4 feet wide; tree lawn 4–6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; shade; Bonsai; highway median; container or planter; trained as a standard
Availability: not native to North America

Figure 1. Middle-aged Caesalpinia granadillo: Bridalveil Tree

Figure 2. Range
Caesalpinia granadillo: Bridalveil Tree

Description
Height: 30 to 35 feet
Spread: 25 to 35 feet
Crown uniformity: irregular
Crown shape: vase
Crown density: moderate
Growth rate: moderate
Texture: fine

Foliage
Leaf arrangement: alternate
Leaf type: bipinnately compound
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: obovate
Leaf venation: pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower
Flower color: yellow
Flower characteristics: showy

Fruit
Fruit shape: pod or pod-like
Fruit length: unknown
Fruit covering: dry or hard
Fruit color: unknown
Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches
Trunk/bark/branches: branches don’t droop; very showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns
Pruning requirement: needed for strong structure
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; alkaline; acidic; well-drained
Drought tolerance: moderate
Aerosol salt tolerance: low

Other
Roots: not a problem
Winter interest: yes
Outstanding tree: yes
Invasive potential: little invasive potential
Ozone sensitivity: unknown
Verticillium wilt susceptibility: unknown
Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

Use and Management
Not commonly available in nurseries, bridalveil tree may increase in popularity once people discover its outstanding characteristics. The fine-textured foliage combines with an upright-vase shape to form a canopy tree with few equals. It is well suited for a residence, staying small enough to keep it from overtaking a property. It can be planted on 25-foot centers along a road, or placed in a parking lot buffer strip to create a nice canopy of soft foliage.

Bridalveil tree should be grown in full sun on well-drained soil. The tree is moderately drought-tolerant. Early pruning is needed to prevent bark from pinching or becoming embedded in the crotches.

Propagation is by seed.

Pests and Diseases
No pests or diseases are of major concern.