Loropetalum chinensis Chinese Fringe Bush

Edward F. Gilman

Introduction
This native of China, Japan, and the Himalayas makes a lovely addition to any landscape (Fig. 1). Although it is capable of growing to about 10 feet tall, most specimens are seen at about 5 to 6 feet with a rounded canopy. Green, pubescent leaves emerge as the delicate white flowers fill the evergreen canopy for about two weeks in the spring. Loropetalum chinensis var rubrum ‘Monraz’ (Razzleberri) comes to the United States from Japan and has raspberry-red flowers. Growers report it flowers several times each year. It will make for a welcomed addition to the collection of small, red-flowered shrubs.

Family: Hamamelidaceae
Plant type: shrub
USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 10A (Fig. 2)
Planting month for zone 7: year round
Planting month for zone 8: year round
Planting month for zone 9: year round
Planting month for zone 10: year round
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: screen; hedge; border; specimen; espalier; small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size)
Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

Description
Height: 6 to 15 feet

Scientific name: Loropetalum chinensis
Pronunciation: lor-roh-PET-tuh-lum chy-NEE-nee
Common name(s): Chinese fringe bush

Figure 1. Chinese fringe bush

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.


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**Spread**: 8 to 10 feet  
**Plant habit**: upright; vase shape; spreading  
**Plant density**: dense  
**Growth rate**: moderate  
**Texture**: medium

### Foliage

- **Leaf arrangement**: alternate  
- **Leaf type**: simple  
- **Leaf margin**: serrate  
- **Leaf shape**: ovate  
- **Leaf venation**: pinnate  
- **Leaf type and persistence**: evergreen  
- **Leaf blade length**: less than 2 inches  
- **Leaf color**: green  
- **Fall color**: no fall color change  
- **Fall characteristic**: not showy

### Flower

- **Flower color**: red  
- **Flower characteristic**: pleasant fragrance; spring flowering

![Figure 3. Flower of Chinese fringe bush](image)

### Fruit

- **Fruit shape**: oval  
- **Fruit length**: unknown  
- **Fruit cover**: dry or hard  
- **Fruit color**: brown  
- **Fruit characteristic**: inconspicuous and not showy

### Trunk and Branches

- **Trunk/bark/branches**: not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; can be trained to grow with a short, single trunk  
- **Current year stem/twig color**: brown  
- **Current year stem/twig thickness**: thin

### Culture

- **Light requirement**: plant grows in part shade/part sun  
- **Soil tolerances**: slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam  
- **Drought tolerance**: moderate  
- **Soil salt tolerances**: unknown

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**Other**

- **Roots**: usually not a problem  
- **Winter interest**: no special winter interest  
- **Outstanding plant**: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more  
- **Invasive potential**: not known to be invasive  
- **Pest resistance**: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

### Use and Management

Fringe bush prefers an acidic soil pH and a mostly sunny position in the landscape, whereas azaleas prefer some shade. Use it as you would an azalea, but in a sunnier location. Its small size makes it well suited for planting in the front of a shrub border as an accent. Mass several together to make a dramatic statement and a nice, delicate flower show.

### Pest and Diseases

Mites can yellow the foliage. Soil nematodes and root rot causes plant decline.

Micronutrient deficiencies appear in alkaline soil.