

Terminalia muelleri: Muellers Terminalia¹

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

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 (Figure 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: According to the IFAS Assessment of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas (IFAS Invasive Plant Working Group 2008), in Florida *Terminalia muelleri* should be treated with caution, may be recommended but managed to prevent escape.

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

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: vase

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

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Texture: medium



Figure 2. Range

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

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.

Literature Cited

Fox, A.M., D.R. Gordon, J.A. Dusky, L. Tyson, and R.K. Stocker. 2008. IFAS Assessment of Non-Native Plants in Florida's Natural Areas: Status Assessment. Cited from the Internet (November 16, 2012), http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/assessment/pdfs/status_assessment.pdf