

Crassula argentea Jade Plant¹

Edward F. Gilman, Ryan W. Klein, and Gail Hansen²

Introduction

Jade plants have long been used in containers where they will live for years in root-bound conditions but can also be used as specimen or hedge plantings outdoors in full sun, part sun, or deep shade. While growth is very slow, jade plants are extremely tolerant of poor, dry soil, the thick, succulent leaves, and stout branches acting as water-reservoirs. This characteristic makes them very suitable for houseplants. Install several plants in a container to develop a full plant quickly.



Figure 1. Full Form - *Crassula argentea*: Jade Plant Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Leaf - *Crassula argentea*: Jade Plant Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 3. Flower - *Crassula argentea*: Jade Plant Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

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- 2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Department of Environmental Horticulture; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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General Information

Scientific name: Crassula argentea

Pronunciation: KRASS-yoo-luh ar-JEN-tee-uh

Common name(s): jade plant

Family: Crassulaceae

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 10 through 11 (Figure 4)

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Uses: border; accent

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

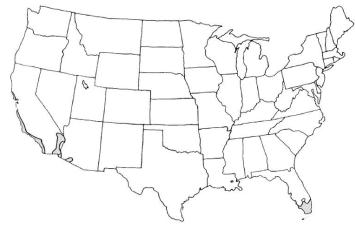


Figure 4. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Description

Height: 2 to 4 feet

Spread: 1 to 3 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: obovate

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: variegated

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: white

Flower characteristic: spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: unknown

Fruit length: less than 1/2 inch

Fruit cover: unknown

Fruit color: red; purple

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

Current year stem/twig color: brown

Current year stem/twig thickness: very thick

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun; plant grows in the shade

Soil tolerances: sand; acidic; slightly alkaline; loam

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Plant spacing: 24 to 36 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by

pests

Use and Management

Jade plant may grow for many years without blooming. When flowers do appear, they form in small, white or pink clusters at the tips of branches. Blooms are uncommon in the areas of the country with high humidity, such as Florida.

Fast-draining soil is a necessity with jade plant to help avoid root-rot, with waterings being infrequent and only when the soil is very dry. In Florida, too much rain and irrigation prevent this plant from use as a landscape plant in all but the driest soil. It has been used as an outdoor specimen or houseplant in the warm areas of California. Trunks to six inches in diameter can develop on older plants.

There is a cultivar with variegated leaves which is commonly used as a house plant.

Propagation is by cuttings.

Pests and Diseases

Jade plants can be bothered by scale, but their major problem is usually overwatering.

No diseases are of major concern.

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