

# ***Dracaena thalioides* Lance Dracaena, Dwarf Dracaena<sup>1</sup>**

Edward F. Gilman, Ryan W. Klein, and Gail Hansen<sup>2</sup>

## **Introduction**

*Dracaena thalioides* is a plant that finds its native habitat in tropical Africa. This 1- to 2-foot-tall species has an upright growth habit and is used in the landscape for its attractive foliage. The dark green leaves are 12 inches long and sit atop a 10-inch-long petiole. The leaf blades are lanceolate in shape and have prominent parallel veins. Small, pink, star-shaped flowers occur in 10-inch-long spikes that appear at various times throughout the year. The flowers and small, fleshy fruits of this plant are inconspicuous.



Figure 1. Full Form - *Abelia x grandiflora*: glossy abelia  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS



Figure 2. Leaf - *Abelia x grandiflora*: glossy abelia  
Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

## **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Dracaena thalioides*

**Pronunciation:** druh-SEE-nuh thal-ee-OY-deez

**Common name(s):** lance dracaena, dwarf dracaena

**Family:** *Agavaceae*

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**Plant type:** ground cover

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10B through 11 (Figure 3)

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

**Uses:** mass planting; ground cover; suitable for growing indoors

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



Figure 3. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

## Description

**Height:** 1 to 2 feet

**Spread:** 1 to 2 feet

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** coarse

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** linear

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 8 to 12 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

## Flower

**Flower color:** pink

**Flower characteristic:** unpleasant fragrance; year-round flowering

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** unknown

**Fruit cover:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** unknown

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** not applicable

## Culture

**Light requirement:** plant grows in the shade

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

**Drought tolerance:**

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Plant spacing:** 24 to 36 inches

## Other

**Roots:** sprouts from roots or lower trunk

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

## Use and Management

Lance dracaena is one of the most shade tolerant plants used in south Florida landscapes. It is frequently utilized as a tall ground cover for shady areas of the landscape and also makes a nice indoor container plant. It is used like cast iron plant in USDA hardiness zones 7 through 9.

This plant will flourish in partial to full shade on rich, moist soils of good drainage. It performs well in acidic soils and will thrive on two applications of fertilizer per summer.

## Pests and Diseases

No known pests are associated with *Dracaena thalioides*.