

Spiraea cantoniensis Reeve's Spiraea, Bridal-Wreath¹

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Introduction

This easily grown, deciduous spiraea has fine-textured, small leaves on long, graceful, arching branches. The pure white, spring flowers appear in dense, bouquet-like clusters all along the stems, giving the plant the appearance of a foaming fountain when in full bloom.



Figure 1. Full Form - *Spiraea cantoniensis*: Reeve's spiraea, Bridal-wreath.

Credits: Edward F. Gilman, UF/IFAS

General Information

Scientific name: *Spiraea cantoniensis*

Pronunciation: spy-REE-uh kan-toe-nee-EN-sis

Common name(s): Reeve's spiraea, bridal-wreath, Reeves' meadowsweet

Family: *Rosaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 9 (Figure 2)



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range

Planting month for zone 7: year-round

Planting month for zone 8: year-round

Planting month for zone 9: year-round

Origin: native to temperate Asia

Invasive potential: not considered a problem species at this time and may be recommended by UF/IFAS faculty (reassess in 10 years)

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Uses: mass planting; specimen; container or above-ground planter; foundation

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

Description

Height: 4 to 8 feet

Spread: 4 to 8 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: serrate

Leaf shape: rhomboid

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow

Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: white

Flower characteristic: spring flowering; pleasant fragrance

Fruit

Fruit shape: unknown

Fruit length: less than 0.5 inch

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

Current year stem/twig color: brown

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun

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

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: poor

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Reeve's spiraea makes an attractive specimen planting, working well also as a hedge or mixed with other flowering shrubs. It needs six to eight feet to develop into the natural fountain or mound-like habit. Little pruning is necessary, but plants can be trimmed after flowering to control size and maintain compact growth. Flowers are produced on year-old growth so pruning should be done just after flowering.

Reeve's spiraea grows best in full sun or high, shifting shade. Plants receiving less than four or five hours of direct sun become thin and flower poorly. Plant on four- to five-foot centers to form a mass planting. As with other white-flowering plants, place in front of other green-foliaged plants or other dark background to show the best flower display.

The cultivar 'Lanceata', or double Reeve's spiraea, is more often seen in the south than the other species and reaches a height of 4 to 6 feet. Double Reeve's spiraea is almost evergreen in the deep south and parts of California.

Propagation is by seeds, cuttings, or division.

Pests and Diseases

No pests are of major concern.

Spiraea aphid causes leaf curling and is usually found on the shoot tips or in flower clusters. Heavy infestations reduce the amount of growth produced by the plant. The insects can be dislodged with high pressure water spray from the garden hose.

Oblique-banded leaf roller rolls and webs the leaves together. Hand pick infested leaves.

Inspect the stems of unhealthy-looking shrubs for scales. Use sprays of horticultural oil to minimize injury to predators that help control scales.

Fire blight causes the leaves to appear scorched. The twig tips die back and dead leaves hang on blighted branches. Prune out infected branches and avoid high nitrogen fertilizer.

A leaf spot may infect the leaves.

Powdery mildew forms a white coating on the leaves.