

Senegalia wrightii: Wright Acacia¹

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Introduction

Quickly growing to 30 feet tall and wide, Wright acacia forms a rounded, open canopy composed of small, bright green leaflets and remains semievergreen in the lower South. The showy springtime displays of 1.5-inch-long spikes of yellow blossoms are abundantly produced over the slightly drooping branches. The blooms are followed by 2-4-inch-long, brown, compressed pods that contain small seeds.



Figure 1. Middle-aged *Senegalia wrightii*: Wright acacia
Credits: Ed Gilman, UF/IFAS

General Information

Scientific name: *Senegalia wrightii*

Pronunciation: Sen-eh-gal-ya RITE-ee-eye

Common name(s): Wright Acacia, Wright Catclaw

Family: *Fabaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 7A through 11 (Figure 2)

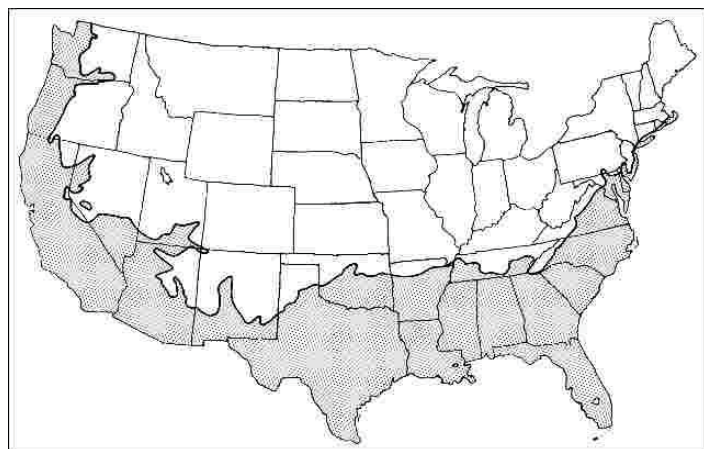


Figure 2. Range.
Credits: UF/IFAS

Origin: native to North America

Invasive potential: not assessed/incomplete assessment

Uses: reclamation; shade; container or planter; deck or patio; specimen; parking lot island < 100 sq. ft.; parking lot

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island 100–200 sq. ft.; parking lot island > 200 sq. ft.; tree lawn 3–4 feet wide; tree lawn 4–6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft. wide; street without sidewalk; highway median

Description

Height: 25 to 30 feet

Spread: 20 to 30 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: vase, upright/erect

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Figure 3)

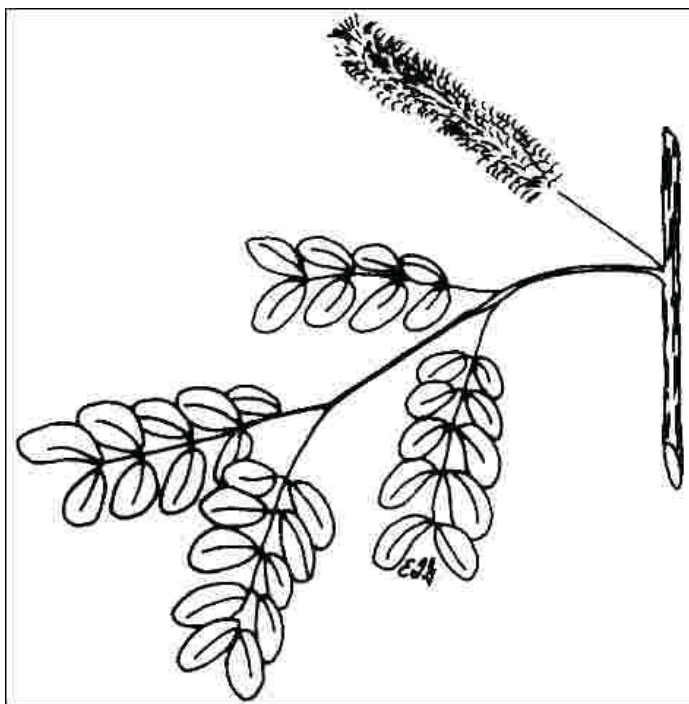


Figure 3. Foliage

Credits: UF/IFAS

Leaf type: even-pinnately compound

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: obovate, oblong

Leaf venation: reticulate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: white/cream/gray

Flower characteristics: showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: pod or pod-like, elongated

Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches, 3 to 6 inches

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns

Pruning requirement: needed for strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: gray, brown

Current year twig thickness: thin

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; acidic; alkaline; well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: unknown

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: yes

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

Use and Management

Multiple trunks arise from the ground growing into the rounded canopy, which provides moderately dense shade. The tree is well-suited for planting near a patio or deck, or it can make a nice street tree or parking lot tree for hot, dry sites. Little irrigation is required after the tree is well-established in the landscape. The spreading crown can cover an area rather quickly, producing ample shade in a small landscape. Plant trees on 20-foot centers to form an arcade of fine-textured small trees.

Wright acacia should be grown in full sun on well-drained soil. Acacias often develop a thin canopy if grown in partial sun. The somewhat-drooping branches may require regular pruning if planted close to sidewalks or streets to allow passage of vehicles and pedestrians.

Propagation is by seed, which germinate easily, or by collection of small plants.

Pests

No pests are of major concern.

Diseases

No diseases are of major concern.