

Caesalpinia granadillo: Bridalveil Tree¹

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Introduction

Bridalveil tree makes a wonderful shade tree. The 35-foot-high tree is clothed with finely textured, pinnately compound, evergreen leaves. In summer and fall, bridalveil tree is decorated with showy yellow blossoms. The bark is also quite striking, peeling off in thin strips showing an unusual green and grey mottling. The tree is usually found growing with several trunks originating from the lower four feet of the tree. This feature, along with the unusual bark traits, make this a highly desirable tree for planting in almost any landscape.

General Information

Scientific name: *Caesalpinia granadillo*

Pronunciation: sez-al-PIN-ee-uh gran-uh-DILL-oh

Common name(s): bridalveil tree

Family: *Fabaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 10B through 11 (Figure 2)

Origin: native to northern South America

UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status: not assessed/incomplete assessment

Uses: sidewalk cutout (tree pit); specimen; street without sidewalk; parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot 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;



Figure 1. Full Form - *Caesalpinia granadillo*: bridalveil tree
Credits: UF/IFAS

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shade; Bonsai; highway median; container or planter; trained as a standard



Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 25 to 35 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular

Crown shape: vase

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: bipinnately compound; made up of 5 to 7 primary leaflets and 3 to 8 pairs of secondary leaflets

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: oblong to obovate

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: secondary leaflets are ½ inch

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow

Flower characteristics: showy; emerges in clusters on axillary racemes

Flowering: summer and fall



Figure 3. Leaf - *Caesalpinia granadillo*: bridalveil tree
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Figure 4. Flower - *Caesalpinia granadillo*: bridalveil tree
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Fruit

Fruit shape: pod or pod-like

Fruit length: unknown

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: dark brown to black

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



Figure 5. Fruit - *Caesalpinia granadillo*: bridalveil tree
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Trunk and Branches

Trunk/branches: branches don't droop; very showy; typically multi-trunked; no thorns

Bark: smooth, thin, peeling, and mottled with various shades of tan, green, gray, and brown

Pruning requirement: needed for strong structure

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; alkaline; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: low



Figure 6. Bark - *Caesalpinia granadillo*: bridalveil tree
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Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: yes

Outstanding tree: yes

Invasive potential: little invasive potential

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: unknown

Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

Use and Management

Not commonly available in nurseries, bridalveil tree may increase in popularity once people discover its outstanding characteristics. The fine-textured foliage combines with an upright-vase shape to form a canopy tree with few equals. It is well suited for a residence, staying small enough to keep it from overtaking a property. It can be planted on 25-foot centers along a road, or placed in a parking lot buffer strip to create a nice canopy of soft foliage.

Bridalveil tree should be grown in full sun on well-drained soil. The tree is moderately drought-tolerant. Early pruning is needed to prevent bark from pinching or becoming embedded in the crotches.

Propagation is by seed.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.

Reference

Koeser, A.K., Friedman, M.H., Hasing, G., Finley, H., Schelb, J. 2017. Trees: South Florida and the Keys. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.