

Styrax japonicus 'Pink Chimes': 'Pink Chimes' Japanese Snowbell¹

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, and Deborah R. Hilbert²

Introduction

This cultivar of Japanese snowbell is a small deciduous tree that slowly grows from 20 to 30 feet in height and has rounded canopy with a horizontal branching pattern. With lower branches removed, it forms a more vase-shaped patio-sized shade tree. The smooth, attractive bark has orange-brown interlacing fissures adding winter interest to any landscape. The pink, bell-shaped, drooping flower clusters of 'Pink Chimes' are quite showy in May to June.

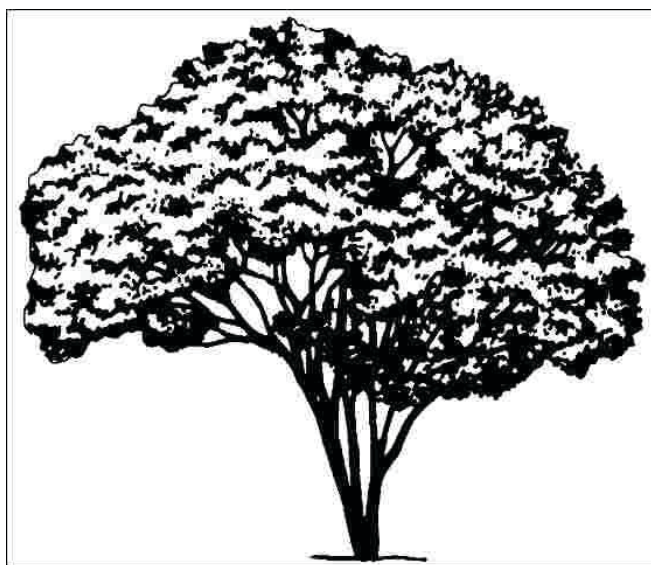


Figure 1. Middle-aged *Styrax japonicus* 'Pink Chimes': 'Pink Chimes' Japanese snowbell.

Credits: UF/IFAS

General Information

Scientific name: *Styrax japonicus*

Pronunciation: STY-racks juh-PAWN-ih-kuss

Common name(s): 'Pink Chimes' Japanese snowbell

Family: *Styracaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5A through 8A (Figure 2)

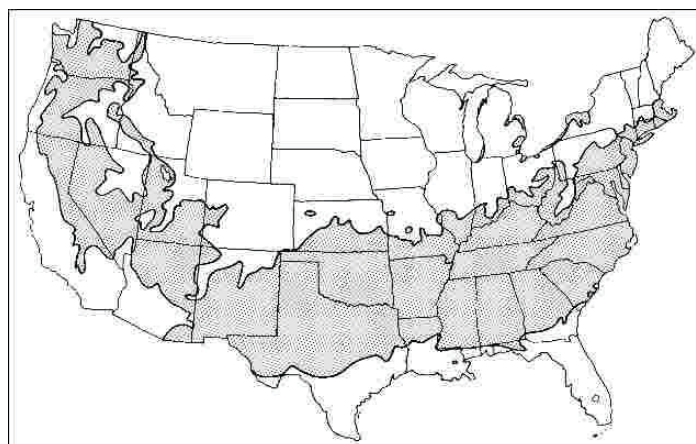


Figure 2. Range.

Credits: UF/IFAS

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: not assessed/incomplete assessment

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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering; Ryan W. Klein, assistant professor, arboriculture; and Deborah R. Hilbert, UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center; Department of Environmental Horticulture; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Uses: trained as a standard; 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; specimen; street without sidewalk; deck or patio; container or planter; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); highway median

Description

Height: 20 to 30 feet

Spread: 15 to 25 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: round, vase

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Figure 3)

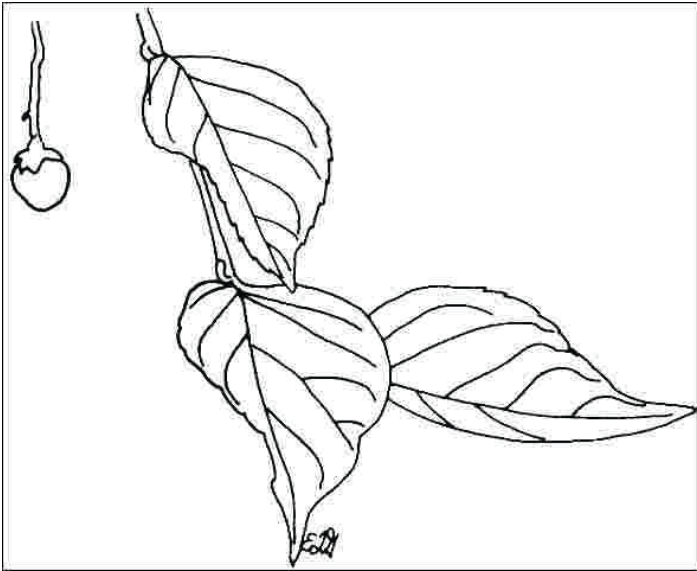


Figure 3. Foliage.

Credits: UF/IFAS

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: sinuate/undulate, entire, serrate

Leaf shape: oblong, elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: pinnate, brachidodrome

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches, 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow, red

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: pink

Flower characteristics: showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval, round

Fruit length: less than 0.5 inch, 0.5 to 1 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: green

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

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches droop; showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns

Pruning requirement: little required

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: thin

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun, partial sun, or partial shade

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

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: yes

Outstanding tree: yes

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: unknown

Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

Use and Management

It is an excellent small patio tree where the flowers and interesting bark can be viewed up close; however, the flowers attract tremendous numbers of bees, and one should be cautious about approaching the plant at that time. Japanese snowbell also makes a wonderful addition to the mixed shrubbery border. Due to its small stature and vase-shape, in moist soil it can make a nice street tree where overhead space is limited. The fruit is somewhat showy and may cause a small litter problem for a short time in the fall. Fall leaf color is unreliable.

Snowbell prefers a peaty, acid soil that is moist but not waterlogged. In colder areas (USDA hardiness zone 5b), locate *Styrax japonicus* in an area protected from winter winds. In the south (USDA hardiness zones 7 and 8) locate it so it receives only part sun during the summer to promote best growth and appearance. This cultivar displays wonderful pink flowers as far south as zone 7b (perhaps in zone 8a).

Other cultivars include: 'Carillon' grows about one-foot per year, has a weeping habit, can be staked to encourage weeping habit; 'Crystal'—upright to fastigate habit, black green foliage, crisp white flowers with purple pedicels (zone 5); 'Issai'—cold hardy to zone 6, grows faster than species and roots easily.

Propagate by softwood cuttings in summer.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases of major concern except ambrosia beetle which can infest stressed trees. It is almost pest free.