

Handroanthus chrysotrichus: Golden Trumpet Tree¹

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, Andrew K. Koeser, Deborah R. Hilbert, and Drew C. McLean²

Introduction

An ideal patio, specimen, or lawn tree, golden trumpet tree is often seen as a small, 25- to 35-foot-tall tree but can reach 50 feet, with a rounded, spreading canopy in a wind-protected area. Sometimes evergreen but most often deciduous, golden trumpet tree has four-inch-long silvery leaves with tan, fuzzy undersides. These leaves drop for a short period in April to May, and it is at this time that the trees put on their heaviest flowering display, the trumpet-shaped, bright yellow blossoms appearing in dense 2.5- to 8-inch-long terminal clusters. Some trees produce a small number of flowers sporadically throughout the warm season. The eight-inch-long seed capsules which follow are brown, hairy, and persist on the tree through the winter.

General Information

Scientific name: *Handroanthus chrysotrichus*

Pronunciation: hand-ro-ANTH-us kriss-oh-TRICK-us

Common name(s): Golden trumpet tree

Family: *Bignoniaceae*

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

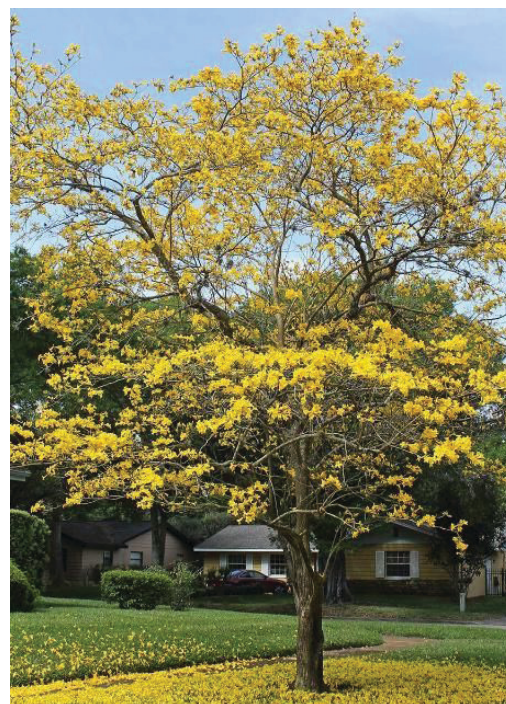


Figure 1. Full Form—*Handroanthus chrysotrichus*: Golden trumpet tree. Credits: UF/IFAS

Origin: native to Brazil and northeast Argentina

UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status: not considered a problem species at this time, may be recommended (North, Central, South)

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2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering; Ryan W. Klein, graduate assistant, Environmental Horticulture Department; Andrew K. Koeser, assistant professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center; Deborah R. Hilbert, Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS GCREC; and Drew C. McLean, biological scientist, Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS GCREC; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Uses: tree lawn 3–4 feet wide; tree lawn 4–6 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; deck or patio; specimen; street without sidewalk; parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot island 100–200 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; highway median; container or planter

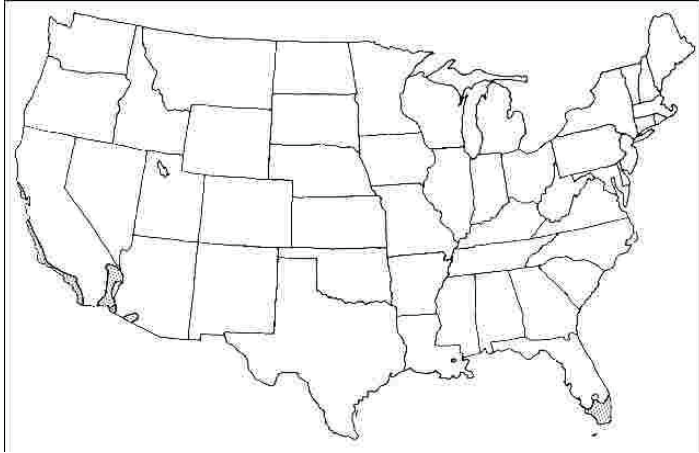


Figure 2. Range.
Credits: UF/IFAS

Description

Height: 25 to 35 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular

Crown shape: round

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: palmately compound; made up of 5 leaflets

Leaf margin: entire, undulate

Leaf shape: oblong, elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: pinnate, brachidodrome

Leaf type and persistence: semi-evergreen, deciduous

Leaf blade length: leaflets are 4 inches

Leaf color: young leaflets are covered in golden pubescence, then become silvery green on top and tan and pubescent underneath

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy



Figure 3. Leaf—*Handroanthus chrysotrichus*: Golden trumpet tree.
Credits: UF/IFAS

Flower

Flower color: bright yellow

Flower characteristics: very showy; trumpet-shaped and emerges in clusters at the ends of branches

Flowering: early spring, before new leaves emerge



Figure 4. Flower—*Handroanthus chrysotrichus*: Golden trumpet tree.
Credits: UF/IFAS

Fruit

Fruit shape: pod or pod-like, elongated

Fruit length: 4 to 15 inches

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown; covered in gold or reddish pubescence

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

Fruiting: shortly after flowering



Figure 5. Fruit—*Handroanthus chrysotrichus*: Golden trumpet tree.
Credits: UF/IFAS

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/branches: branches droop; not showy; typically one trunk; no thorns

Bark: tan, smooth, with shallow vertical fissures when young, becoming rougher and more deeply set with age

Pruning requirement: little required

Breakage: susceptible to breakage

Current year twig color: brown, green

Current year twig thickness: medium

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun

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

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate



Figure 6. Bark—*Handroanthus chrysotrichus*: Golden trumpet tree.
Credits: Gitta Hasing

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: yes

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: unknown

Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

Use and Management

Golden trumpet tree is very useful as a median street tree for its vivid flower display, asymmetrical habit and drought tolerance. Once established it can survive on rainfall alone and produce an excellent flower display each year. It also makes a nice tree for planting close to the patio or deck where it will cast a light to medium shade below the canopy.

A native of tropical America, golden trumpet tree can be grown best in full sun on any reasonably fertile soil with moderate moisture. Trees should be protected from frost. Although some will leaf out following a freeze, the tree is often weakened and grows poorly. The wood becomes brittle with age and can break easily in strong winds, so it is not often seen larger than about 30 feet tall. But this

should not dampen your desire to plant this wonderful tree because it provides such enjoyment in the meantime.

Trees planted with circling roots often fall over as they mature. Be sure to slice the root ball on container-grown trees.

Propagation is by seed or layering.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.

References

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