



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## *Bauhinia punctata*<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

Red Bauhinia (formerly ) is a dense, semi-climbing, evergreen shrub with deeply-cleft, 2-lobed leaves that resemble the hooves of cattle (Fig. 1). The flowers of this sprawling plant are orchid-like in appearance, brick-red in color, and borne in few flowered racemes. The 1 1/2-inch-wide flowers of Red Bauhinia occur in the spring and summer and put on quite a show if the plant is trained on a trellis. The fruits are 5-inch-long pods that appear in the late summer, and these may be a litter problem.

### General Information

**Scientific name:** *Bauhinia punctata*

**Pronunciation:** baw-HIN-ee-uh punk-TAY-tuh

**Common name(s):** Red Bauhinia, Nasturtium Bauhinia

**Family:** *Leguminosae*

**Plant type:** shrub; vine

**USDA hardiness zones:** 9B through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** specimen; espalier; hanging basket; border; ground cover

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

### Description

**Height:** depends upon supporting structure

**Spread:** 6 to 15 feet

**Plant habit:** spreading

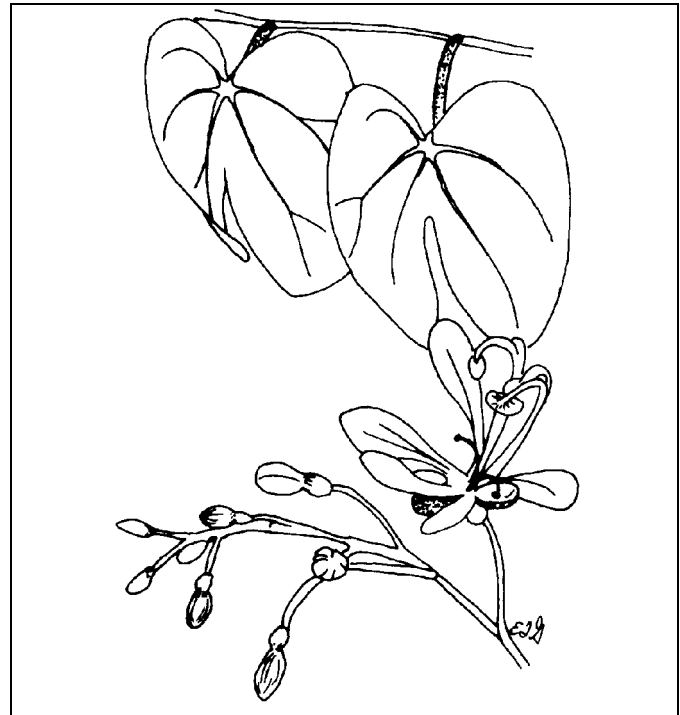


Figure 1. Red Bauhinia.

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** medium

#### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf margin:** lobed  
**Leaf shape:** oblong  
**Leaf venation:** palmate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** no fall color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** red  
**Flower characteristic:** spring flowering; summer flowering; fall flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** pod or pod-like  
**Fruit length:** 3 to 6 inches  
**Fruit cover:** dry or hard  
**Fruit color:** brown  
**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; not particularly showy  
**Current year stem/twig color:** brown  
**Current year stem/twig thickness:** medium

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun  
**Soil tolerances:** acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay;  
**Drought tolerance:** high  
**Soil salt tolerances:** moderate  
**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

**Other**

**Roots:** usually not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no special winter interest  
**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential:** aggressive, spreading plant  
**Pest resistance:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

## Use and Management

Red Bauhinia is nice in the landscape as an espalier, specimen, border, ground cover, and container plant. It climbs a fence nicely producing most of the flowers near the top. It is a bit asymmetrical, perhaps even unkempt looking making it best suited for the large-scale landscape planting.

Red Bauhinia requires a location in the landscape in which it receives full sun and grows best on a well-drained, sandy loam soil. It often suffers from a deficiency of micronutrients in soil with a pH above 7. Preventive fertilizer applications help keep the foliage green. This plant requires little maintenance once it is established but may need early spring pruning or shaping for growth control.

*Bauhinia* is propagated by seeds or cuttings.

### Pests and Diseases

Chewing insects may mar the foliage.