



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Cuphea ignea*¹

Edward F. Gilman²

Introduction

Year-round flowering, attractive small foliage and a neat, round shape help to make Cigarflower a nice addition to any landscape (Fig. 1). It is not readily available in quantity, but can occasionally be purchased at specialty garden centers. Plants grow no more than about 2-feet-tall and 3-feet-wide and will attract attention in the shrub or perennial border. Many stems arise near the base of the plant but they branch infrequently. Flowers are continually produced on new growth during the warm seasons in Florida. It can be used as an annual bedding plant elsewhere because frost kills it to the ground.

General Information

Scientific name: *Cuphea ignea*

Pronunciation: KOO-fee-uh IG-nee-uh

Common name(s): Cigar Plant, Cigarflower

Family: *Lythraceae*

Plant type: shrub

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: container or above-ground planter; specimen; foundation; attracts hummingbirds

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

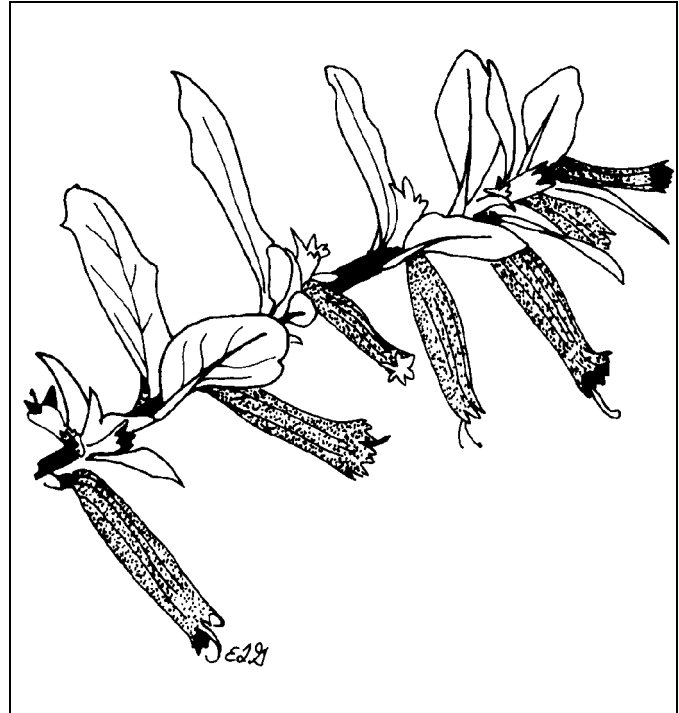


Figure 1. Cigar Plant.

Spread: 2 to 3 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: fine

Foliage

Description

Height: 1 to 3 feet

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-160, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1999. Please visit the EDIS web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. For information on obtaining other extension publications, contact your county Cooperative Extension Service office. Florida Cooperative Extension Service / Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences / University of Florida / Christine Taylor Waddill, Dean



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)
Leaf venation: bowed
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: red
Flower characteristic: year-round flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated
Fruit length: less than .5 inch
Fruit cover: dry or hard
Fruit color: unknown
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: reddish
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun
Soil tolerances: loam; acidic; clay; sand; alkaline
Drought tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerances: poor
Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem
Winter interest: plant has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers
Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

In central and south Florida, cut plants to the ground when warm weather returns in the spring. Plants can be cut back in other regions after danger of frost leaves the region in the spring. This stimulates fresh growth from the base of the plant and removes last years twigs.

A sunny or partially shaded location gives the best growth. Soils should be kept moist.

Pests and Diseases

Cigarflower resists most pest and diseases problems.