

Acacia auriculiformis Earleaf Acacia¹

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INTRODUCTION

Quickly reaching a height of 40 feet and a spread of 25 feet, Earleaf Acacia becomes a loose, rounded, evergreen, open shade tree (Fig. 1). It is often planted for its abundance of small, beautiful, bright yellow flowers and fast growth. The flattened, curved branchlets, which look like leaves, are joined by twisted, brown, ear-shaped seed pods. Growing 6 to 8 feet per year, Earleaf Acacia quickly grows into a medium-sized shade tree. This makes it a popular tree. However, it has brittle wood and weak branch crotches, and the tree can be badly damaged during wind storms. Prune branches so there is a wide angle of attachment to help them from splitting from the tree. Also be sure to keep the major branches pruned back so they stay less than half the diameter of the trunk. These techniques might increase the longevity of existing trees.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Acacia auriculiformis*

Pronunciation: uh-KAY-shuh
ah-rick-yoo-lih-FOR-miss

Common name(s): Earleaf Acacia

Family: *Leguminosae*

USDA hardiness zones: 10 through 11 (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: not recommended for planting

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

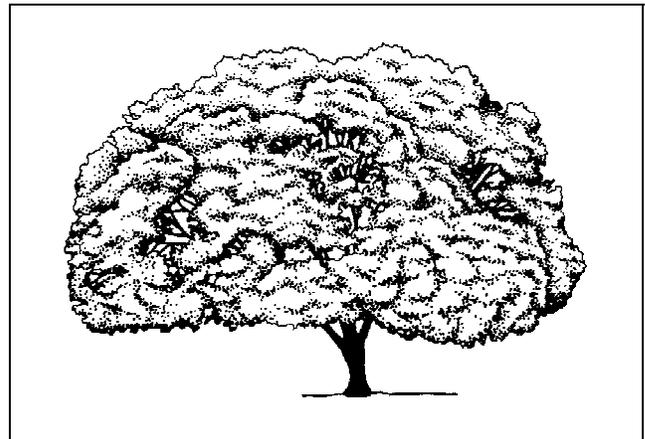


Figure 1. Mature Earleaf Acacia.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 35 to 40 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular outline or silhouette

Crown shape: round

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: linear

Leaf venation: parallel

Leaf type and persistence: broadleaf evergreen;
evergreen

Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow

Flower characteristics: showy; spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: irregular

Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter; persistent on the tree; showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

Pruning requirement: requires pruning to develop strong structure

Breakage: susceptible to breakage either at the crotch due to poor collar formation, or the wood itself is weak and tends to break

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in full sun

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

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: No entries found.

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

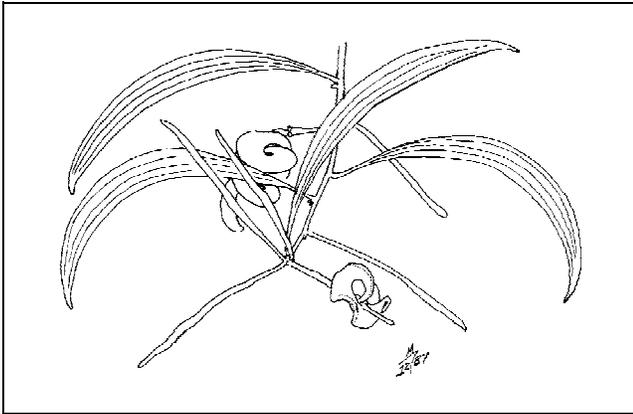


Figure 3. Foliage of Earleaf Acacia.

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Seeds also germinate in the landscape and it has escaped cultivation in south Florida where it is becoming a mildly invasive weed in some areas. However, it is not as invasive as Australian pine or Brazilian pepper and probably will not become so. For these reasons, many people consider this to be an undesirable tree.

Earleaf Acacia grows in full sun on almost any soil including alkaline and is moderately salt-tolerant. It will withstand periods of water inundation but is also very tolerant of drought.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern. Occasionally anthracnose infects leaves.