



Cornus walteri Walter Dogwood¹

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INTRODUCTION

Walter Dogwood is a medium-sized deciduous tree reaching 30 to 40 feet in height and width (Fig. 1). The two to five-inch-long leaves are dark green and are joined in June by the small white flowers arranged in two to three-inch diameter cymes. The blossoms are followed by the production of small black fruits which are popular with birds and other wildlife. Walter Dogwood is probably best known for the alligator-like bark on older specimens, even more so than Flowering Dogwood. Young specimens have an upright branching habit giving way to an open spreading habit. The branches probably droop less than most other Dogwoods, making it a possible candidate for street tree use although they have not been tested for this in the United States. Most certainly a good patio tree providing shade quickly.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Cornus walteri*

Pronunciation: KOR-nus WALL-ter-eye

Common name(s): Walter Dogwood

Family: *Cornaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5 through 8A (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: near a deck or patio; shade tree; residential street tree

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

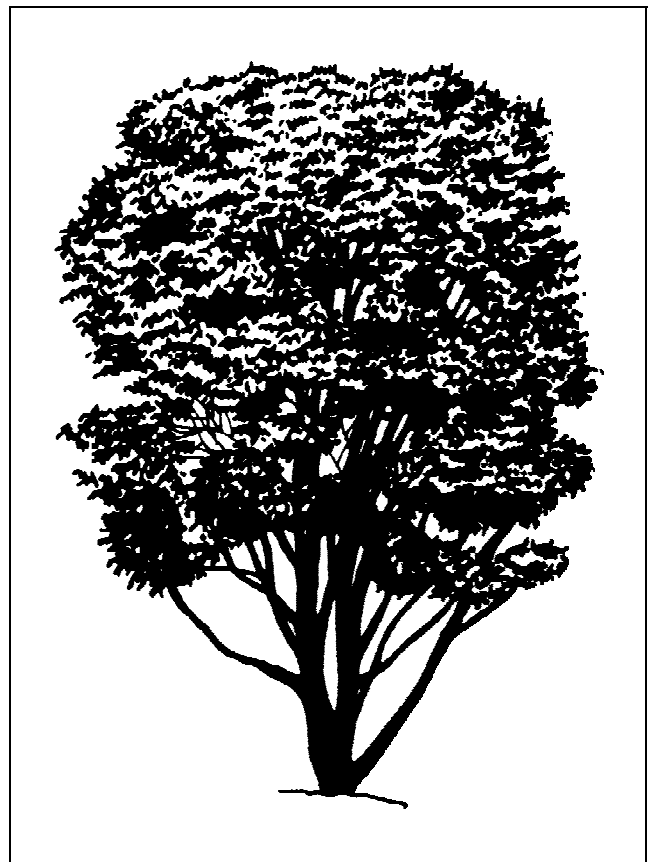


Figure 1. Mature Walter Dogwood.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 30 to 40 feet

Spread: 30 to 40 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

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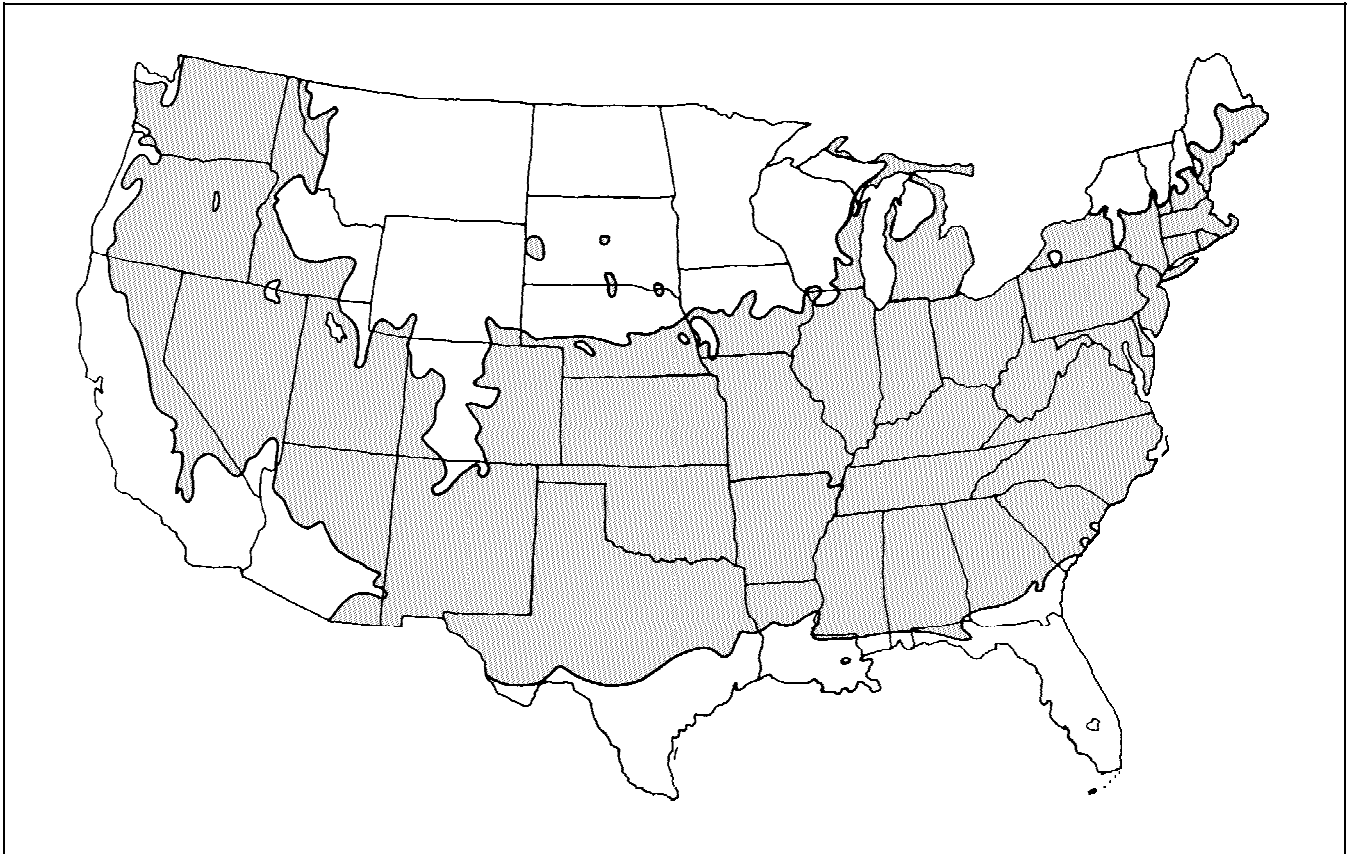


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Crown shape: vase shape

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: serrate; serrulate

Leaf shape: ovate

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches; 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: red

Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: white

Flower characteristics: showy; spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: < .5 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: black

Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; attracts squirrels and other mammals; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: grow mostly upright and will not droop; showy trunk; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: medium

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun

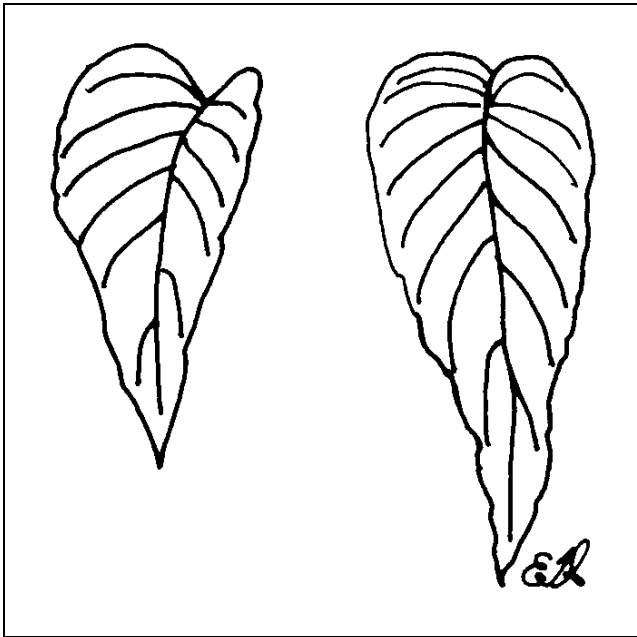


Figure 3. Foliage of Walter Dogwood.

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

Drought tolerance: high

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

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

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Grown in the full sun it develops a dense canopy but is more open and perhaps more attractive in partial shade. The plant is now rare in the industry but deserves to be tried. It is highly drought tolerant and grows well in clay soil.

Propagation is by cuttings or seed.

Pests

No pests are of major concern at this time.

Diseases

Possibly leaf spot, twig blight, or canker. See diseases section of Flowering Dogwood.