



Crataegus viridis 'Winter King' 'Winter King' Southern Hawthorn¹

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INTRODUCTION

'Winter King' Southern Hawthorn is a North American native tree which slowly reaches 20 to 30 feet in height and spread (Fig. 1). It is very dense and thorny which makes it a popular choice for use as a hedge or as a screen. Unlike other Hawthorns, the thorns are small and inconspicuous. The dark green, deciduous leaves turn beautiful shades of bronze, red, and gold in the fall before dropping. The handsome, silver-grey bark peels off in sections to reveal the inner orange bark, making 'Winter King' Southern Hawthorn a striking specimen planting in the winter landscape. The white blooms are followed by large, orange/red fruits which persist on the naked tree throughout the winter, adding to its landscape interest. The tree was originally selected for the outstanding winter berry color. The original tree from which the cultivar was selected is about 100 years old and 25 feet tall.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Crataegus viridis* 'Winter King'

Pronunciation: kruh-TEE-gus VEER-ih-diss

Common name(s): 'Winter King' Southern Hawthorn, 'Winter King' Green Hawthorn

Family: *Rosaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 4 through 7 (Fig. 2)

Origin: native to North America

Uses: container or above-ground planter; hedge; large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); reclamation plant; screen;

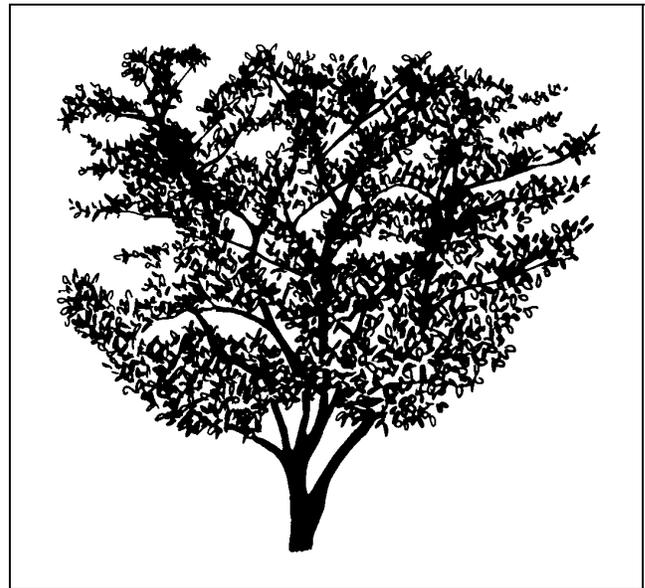


Figure 1. Middle-aged 'Winter King' Southern Hawthorn.

small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size); narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; residential street tree; tree has been successfully grown in urban areas where air pollution, poor drainage, compacted soil, and/or drought are common

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

DESCRIPTION

Height: 20 to 30 feet

Spread: 20 to 30 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: round; vase shape

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: medium

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: lobed; serrate

Leaf shape: ovate

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: white

Flower characteristics: spring flowering; very showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch; < .5 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: orange; red

Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; no significant litter problem; 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; routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; showy trunk; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; thorns are present on the trunk or branches

Pruning requirement: requires pruning to develop strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown; reddish

Current year twig thickness: medium

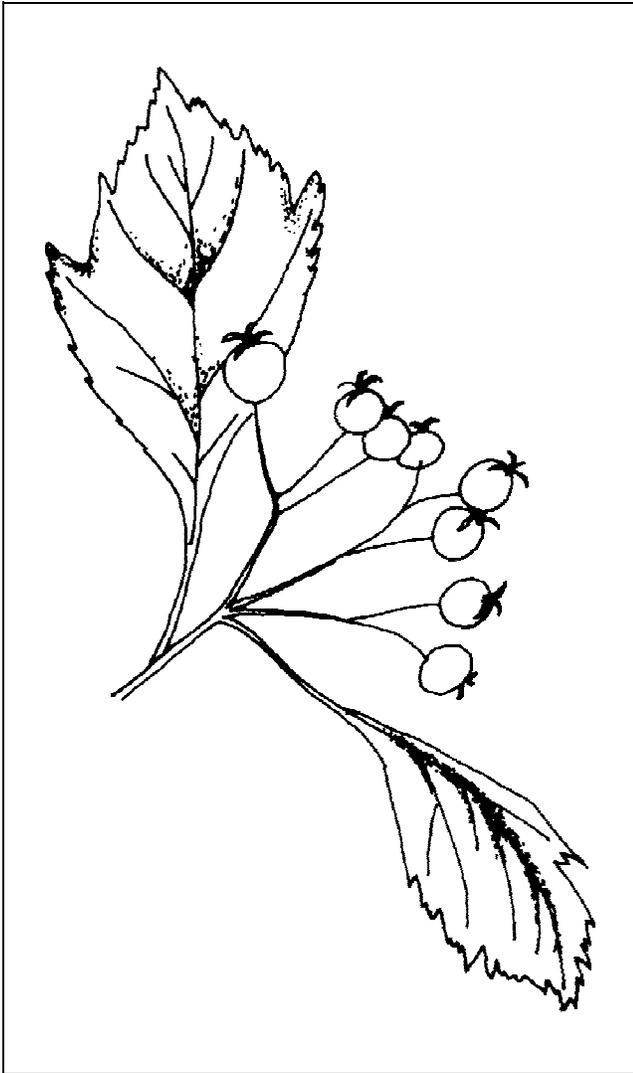


Figure 3. Foliage of 'Winter King' Southern Hawthorn.

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: low

Soil salt tolerance: poor

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

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

The multiple trunks and wide pyramidal to rounded shape make this adaptable tree well suited for the low maintenance landscape as a specimen. If lower branches are removed from the trunks, a more vase shape can be maintained. It has become quite popular and is available in many areas.

'Winter King' Southern Hawthorn should be grown in full sun on well-drained soil. It is a very adaptable tree well suited for the urban landscape. The short thorns are usually not a problem, even on trees planted near streets. It is among the best of the many Hawthorns that are available, receiving the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's 1992 Styer Gold Medal Award.

Transplant in the spring for best establishment.

Propagation is by grafting.

Pests

Problem pests are aphids, borers, caterpillars, and leaf miners

Diseases

It is susceptible to cedar-hawthorn rust but is more resistant than the species.