



Tecoma stans Yellow-Elder¹

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson²

INTRODUCTION

This spreading, fast-growing evergreen shrub or small tree is noted for its brilliant, bell-shaped, fragrant yellow flowers (Fig. 1). Reaching full bloom in fall, Yellow-Elder produces some flowers with each flush of new growth and therefore has some color most of the year.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Tecoma stans*

Pronunciation: teh-KOE-muh stanz

Common name(s): Yellow-Elder, Yellow Trumpet-Flower

Family: *Bignoniaceae*

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

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: container or above-ground planter; espalier; large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; residential street tree; no proven urban tolerance

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

DESCRIPTION

Height: 20 to 30 feet

Spread: 20 to 30 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular outline or silhouette

Crown shape: oval

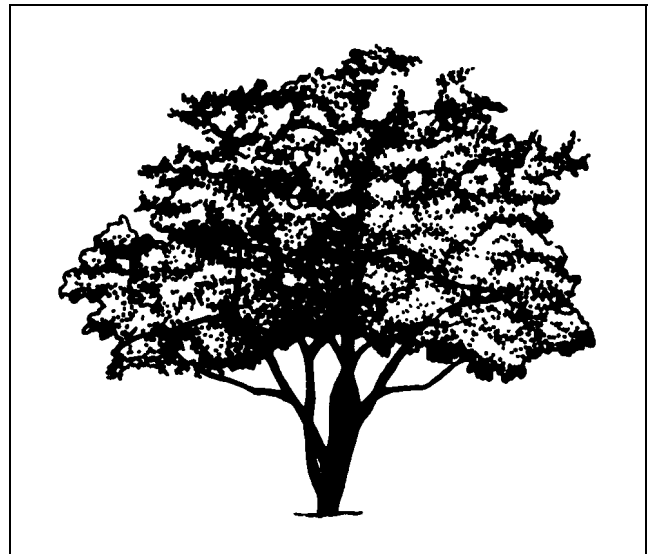


Figure 1. Mature Yellow-Elder.

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: medium

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: odd pinnately compound

Leaflet margin: serrate

Leaflet shape: lanceolate; ovate

Leaflet venation: banchidodrome; pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen;
semievergreen

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

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-625, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
2. Edward F. Gilman, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow

Flower characteristics: very showy; year round flowering (Fig. 3)

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated

Fruit length: 6 to 12 inches; 3 to 6 inches

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; no significant litter problem; 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; not particularly showy; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; no thorns

Pruning requirement: requires pruning to develop strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in full sun

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

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

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

Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

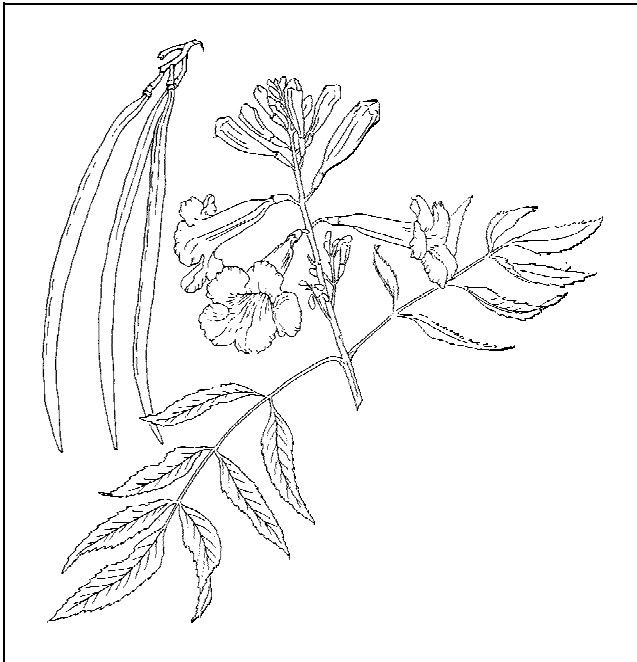


Figure 3. Flower of Yellow-Elder.

USE AND MANAGEMENT

While sometimes trained to a single trunk, Yellow-Elder is most often used as a specimen or mixed into a shrub border. The somewhat weedy growth requires pruning to control shape, but it is worth the effort due to the brilliant flowers. Its small stature allows it to be used beneath power lines as a street tree.

Growing in full sun on any well-drained soil, Yellow-Elder survives on rain alone making it well-suited to naturalized and low-maintenance gardens. It would also make a nice patio tree and is suited for planting in parking lot islands and medians. The dropping fruit can cause a slight litter problem.

Plants grow easily from seed and can also be propagated from cuttings. Seedlings are easily transplanted and will bloom within two years.

Pests

Yellow-Elder is relatively pest-free with chewing insects and scale being only minor problems.

Diseases

No diseases are of major concern.