



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Calliandra haematocephala 'Nana'¹

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Introduction

A selection of the more common powderpuff, this compact cultivar grows to only about 5 feet tall. Pinnately compound leaves bear fewer leaflets and flowers are smaller than the species. Red flowers are borne throughout the canopy in the warm months of the year. Whereas the species develops an open growth habit without pruning, this selection stays compact and dense. In many ways it is superior to the species if a small shrub is needed.

General Information

Scientific name: *Calliandra haematocephala* 'Nana'

Pronunciation: kal-lee-AN-druh hee-mat-oh-SEFF-uh-luh

Common name(s): Dwarf Red Powderpuff

Family: *Leguminosae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 9 through 11 (Fig. 1)

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: border; container or above-ground planter; foundation; attracts butterflies; mass planting; small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size)

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

Description

Height: 3 to 5 feet

Spread: 4 to 8 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: even-pinnately compound

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: parallel; pinnate

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: pink; white

Flower characteristic: year-round flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: pod or pod-like

Fruit length: unknown

Fruit cover: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

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Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

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: medium

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam

Drought tolerance: high

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: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Dwarf Powderpuff makes a fine hedge requiring less frequent pruning than the species. Plant on 4- to 5-foot centers to establish a solid hedge or border. Its small size also makes it suited for planting along a house foundation.

With rapid growth in sandy soils and full sun, Powderpuff Bush will respond favorably to regular watering while young but should require no special care once established except an occasional pruning to keep it within bounds.

Pests and Diseases

Since the plant has not been widely used, pest problems are not well understood. Look for the same problems as you may find on the larger Powderpuff trees.