



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Calypttranthes pallens*¹

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Introduction

Spicewood is an upright shrub or small tree with a unique spicy fragrance that gives this plant its more popular common name (Fig. 1). This member of the Myrtle family has small light green, glossy leaves that have a pink to red tinge when young. The flowers open when a small lid flips up from the floral cup. These mostly inconspicuous, spring and summer blooms are white to beige in color and have a pleasant fragrance. The fruits change from green to orange, red, yellow, and then black. The tree and the fruits are appealing to many species of birds; the smaller birds use the tree as cover.

General Information

Scientific name: *Calypttranthes pallens*

Pronunciation: kal-lip-TRANTH-eez PAL-lenz

Common name(s): Spicewood, Pale Lidflower

Family: *Myrtaceae*

Plant type: tree

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

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: trained as a standard; screen; border; espalier; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; superior hedge

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

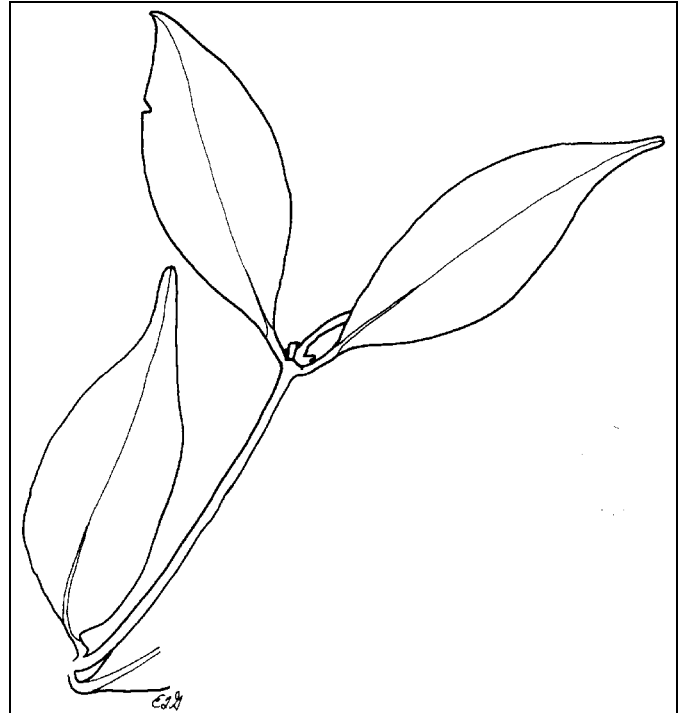


Figure 1. Spicewood.

Spread: 6 to 10 feet

Plant habit: oval

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Foliage

Description

Height: 10 to 15 feet

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: ovate
Leaf venation: pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: white
Flower characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering; summer flowering; fall flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval
Fruit length: unknown
Fruit cover: dry or hard
Fruit color: red; yellow; black
Fruit characteristic: attracts birds

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems
Current year stem/twig color: brown
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun
Soil tolerances: occasionally wet; acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay;
Drought tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

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

Use and Management

Spicewood may be used as a specimen, or can be clipped into a hedge or maintained as a foundation plant. It can be trained into a small, multi-trunk tree.

Spicewood prefers a full sun to light shade location in the landscape. It is adaptable to many soils and is moderately drought tolerant. However, this plant grows best in moist to wet areas.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.