**Dracaena thaliioides**

Edward F. Gilman

**Introduction**

*Dracaena thaliioides* is a plant that finds its native habitat in tropical Africa (Fig. 1). This 1- to 2-foot-tall species has an upright growth habit and is used in the landscape for its attractive foliage. The dark green leaves are 12 inches long and sit atop a 10-inch-long petiole. The leaf blades are lanceolate in shape and have prominent parallel veins. Small, pink, star-shaped flowers occur in 10-inch-long spikes that appear at various times throughout the year. The flowers and small, fleshy fruits of this plant are inconspicuous.

**General Information**

- **Scientific name:** *Dracaena thaliioides*
- **Pronunciation:** dru-SEE-nuh thal-ee-oy-deez
- **Common name(s):** Lance Dracaena, Dwarf Dracaena
- **Family:** Agavaceae
- **Plant type:** ground cover
- **USDA hardiness zones:** 10B through 11 (Fig. 2)
- **Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round
- **Origin:** not native to North America
- **Uses:** mass planting; ground cover; suitable for growing indoors
- **Availability:** somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

**Description**

- **Height:** 1 to 2 feet
- **Spread:** 1 to 2 feet
- **Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** coarse

**Foliage**

- **Leaf arrangement:** alternate
- **Leaf type:** simple

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf margin: entire  
Leaf shape: linear  
Leaf venation: parallel  
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen  
Leaf blade length: 8 to 12 inches  
Leaf color: green  
Fall color: no fall color change  
Fall characteristic: not showy

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

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in the shade  
Soil tolerances: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay  
Drought tolerance:  
Soil salt tolerances: poor  
Plant spacing: 24 to 36 inches

Other

Roots: sprouts from roots or lower trunk  
Winter interest: no special winter interest  
Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more  
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive  
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests
Use and Management

Lance Dracaena is one of the most shade tolerant plants used in south Florida landscapes. It is frequently utilized as a tall ground cover for shady areas of the landscape and also makes a nice indoor container plant. It is used like Cast Iron Plant is in USDA hardiness zones 7 through 9.

This plant will flourish in partial to full shade on rich, moist soils of good drainage. It performs well in acidic soils and will thrive on two applications of fertilizer per summer.

Pests and Diseases

No known pests are associated with Dracaena thalioides.