



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

***Ficus benjamina* 'Jaqueline'**¹

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Introduction

This is a huge tree growing to 60 feet tall and 60 to 70 feet wide (Fig. 1). The dense, rounded canopy and gracefully drooping branches of Weeping Fig made it quite popular as a landscape tree until recently. The thick, shiny, two to five-inch-long, evergreen leaves generously clothe the long branches, and the tiny figs eventually turn a deep red. Branches will weep toward the ground forming a canopy so dense that nothing grows beneath it.

General Information

Scientific name: *Ficus benjamina* 'Jaqueline'

Pronunciation: FYE-kus ben-juh-MYE-nuh

Common name(s): 'Jaqueline' Weeping Fig

Family: *Moraceae*

Plant type: tree

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

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: suitable for growing indoors; container or above-ground planter; hedge; bonsai

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

Description

Height: 45 to 60 feet

Spread: 60 to 100 feet

Plant habit: round; spreading

Plant density: dense

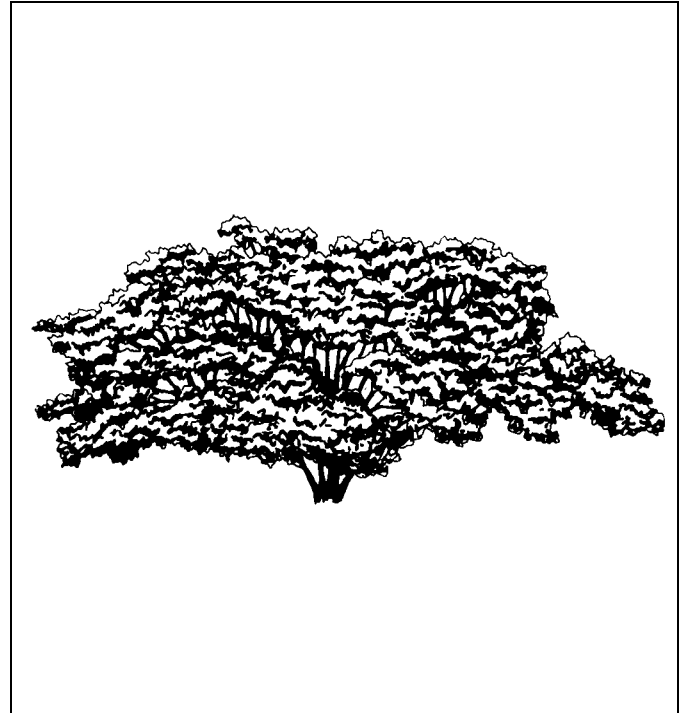


Figure 1. 'Jaqueline' Weeping Fig.

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: variegated

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: unknown

Flower characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: less than .5 inch

Fruit cover: fleshy

Fruit color: red

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: no thorns

Current year stem/twig color: gray/silver

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun; plant grows in the shade

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

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Plant spacing: not applicable

Other

Roots: can form large surface roots

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: potentially invasive

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

Use and Management

Fruit can stain cars and sidewalks so the tree should not be planted close to streets, walks or parking lots. It also makes quite a mess around the tree as the fruit fall to the ground. The tree is much too large for residential planting unless it is used as a hedge or clipped screen, but can be seen growing into massive trees in parks and other large-scale areas. Aerial roots descend from the branches, touch the ground and take root, eventually forming numerous sturdy trunks which can clog a landscape. Trees can grow to be quite large and spreading in this fashion. Roots grow rapidly invading gardens, growing under and lifting sidewalks, patios, and driveways.

There have been recent reports of fertile fruit germinating in some landscapes in south Florida. This is of concern since this could give the tree the potential of spreading and perhaps becoming a pesty weed, something which is definitely not needed in south Florida.

Able to tolerate severe pruning, Weeping Fig can also be successfully used as a clipped hedge or screen and is probably best used in this fashion, or can be trained into an espalier or topiary. Young trees are often grown in containers, appearing on patios, at entranceways, or indoors.

Weeping Fig will grow in full sun or partial shade on any well-drained soil. Plants should be carefully watered when young and later during droughts. Plants are very frost-sensitive.

The cultivar 'Exotica' has wavy-edged leaves with long, twisted tips. There are other *Ficus* such as *Ficus rubiginosa* which do not produce aerial roots and are much better suited as landscape trees for shade because they will not take over the landscape as will Weeping Fig.

Propagation is by cuttings or layering.

Weeping Fig may be infected by scales, but is resistant to leaf thrips which will distort new leaves on some other figs.

Pests and Diseases

No diseases are of major concern.