Introduction

This native of China, Japan and the Himalayas makes a lovely addition to any landscape (Fig. 1). Although it is capable of growing to about 10-feet-tall, most specimens are seen at about 5 to 6 feet with a rounded canopy. Green, pubescent leaves emerge as the delicate white flowers fill the evergreen canopy for about two weeks in the spring. Loropetalum chinensis rubrum ‘Monraz’ (Razzleberri) comes to the United States from Japan and has raspberry-red flowers. Growers report it flowers several times each year. It will make for a welcomed addition to the collection of small, red-flowered shrubs.

General Information

Scientific name: Loropetalum chinensis
Pronunciation: lor-roh-PET-tuh chy-NEE-see
Common name(s): Chinese Fringe-Bush
Family: Hamamelidaceae
Plant type: shrub
USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 10A (Fig. 2)
Planting month for zone 7: year round
Planting month for zone 8: year round
Planting month for zone 9: year round
Planting month for zone 10: year round
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: screen; hedge; border; specimen; espalier; 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: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

Description

Height: 6 to 15 feet
Spread: 8 to 10 feet
Plant habit: upright; vase shape; spreading
Plant density: dense
Loropetalum chinensis -- Chinese Fringe-Bush

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Growth rate: moderate
Texture: medium

Foliage
Leaf arrangement: alternate
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: serrate
Leaf shape: ovate
Leaf venation: 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: red
Flower characteristic: pleasant fragrance; spring flowering

Fruit
Fruit shape: oval
Fruit length: unknown
Fruit cover: dry or hard
Fruit color: brown
Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches
Trunk/bark/branches: not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; can be trained to grow with a short, single trunk
Current year stem/twig color: brown
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

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

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Other

Roots: usually not a problem
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: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

Fringebush prefers an acid soil pH and a mostly sunny position in the landscape; whereas, azaleas prefer some shade. Use it as you would an azalea but it a sunnier location. Its small size makes it well suited for planting in the front of a shrub border as an accent. Mass several together to make a dramatic statement and a nice, delicate flower show.

Pests and Diseases

Mites can yellow the foliage. Soil nematodes and root rot causes plant decline. Micro nutrient deficiencies appear in alkaline soil.