



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## *Wisteria sinensis*<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

Chinese Wisteria is a shade-tolerant vine, but it blooms only when grown in the partial to full sun (Fig. 1). It prefers a deep, rich loam, but will grow in any soil. Wisteria has a fast growth rate and may be hard to transplant due to a coarse root system. Planting from containers is easy. The roots are aggressive and could disrupt a nearby garden. The violet-blue flowers, borne in showy, drooping racemes, are produced in late winter (hardiness zone 8 and 9) to early summer (hardiness zone 6). They cover the plant for several weeks each year.

### General Information

**Scientific name:** *Wisteria sinensis*

**Pronunciation:** wiss-STEER-ree-uh sye-NEN-sis

**Common name(s):** Chinese Wisteria

**Family:** *Leguminosae*

**Plant type:** vine

**USDA hardiness zones:** 5 through 9 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 7:** year round

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** espalier; container or above-ground planter

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

### Description

**Height:** depends upon supporting structure

**Spread:** depends upon supporting structure

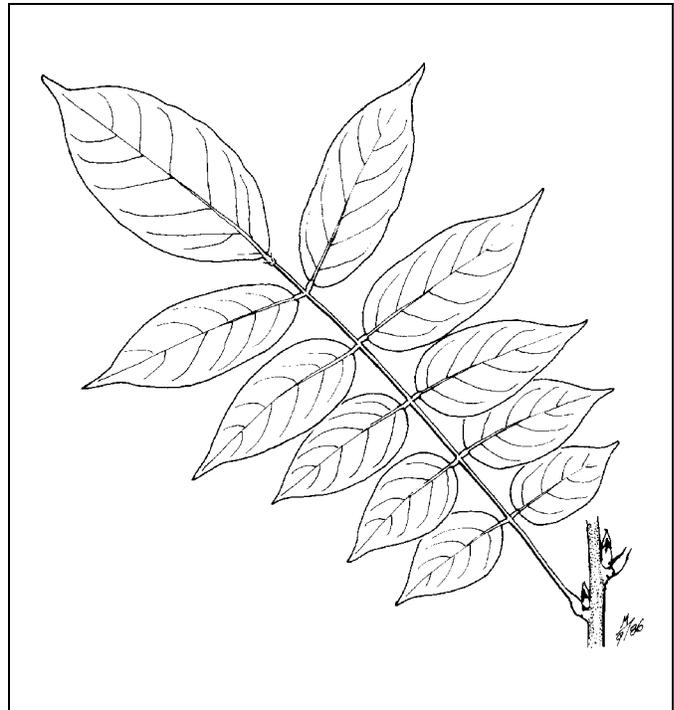


Figure 1. Chinese Wisteria.

**Plant habit:** spreading

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** coarse

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-613, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October, 1999 Please visit the EDIS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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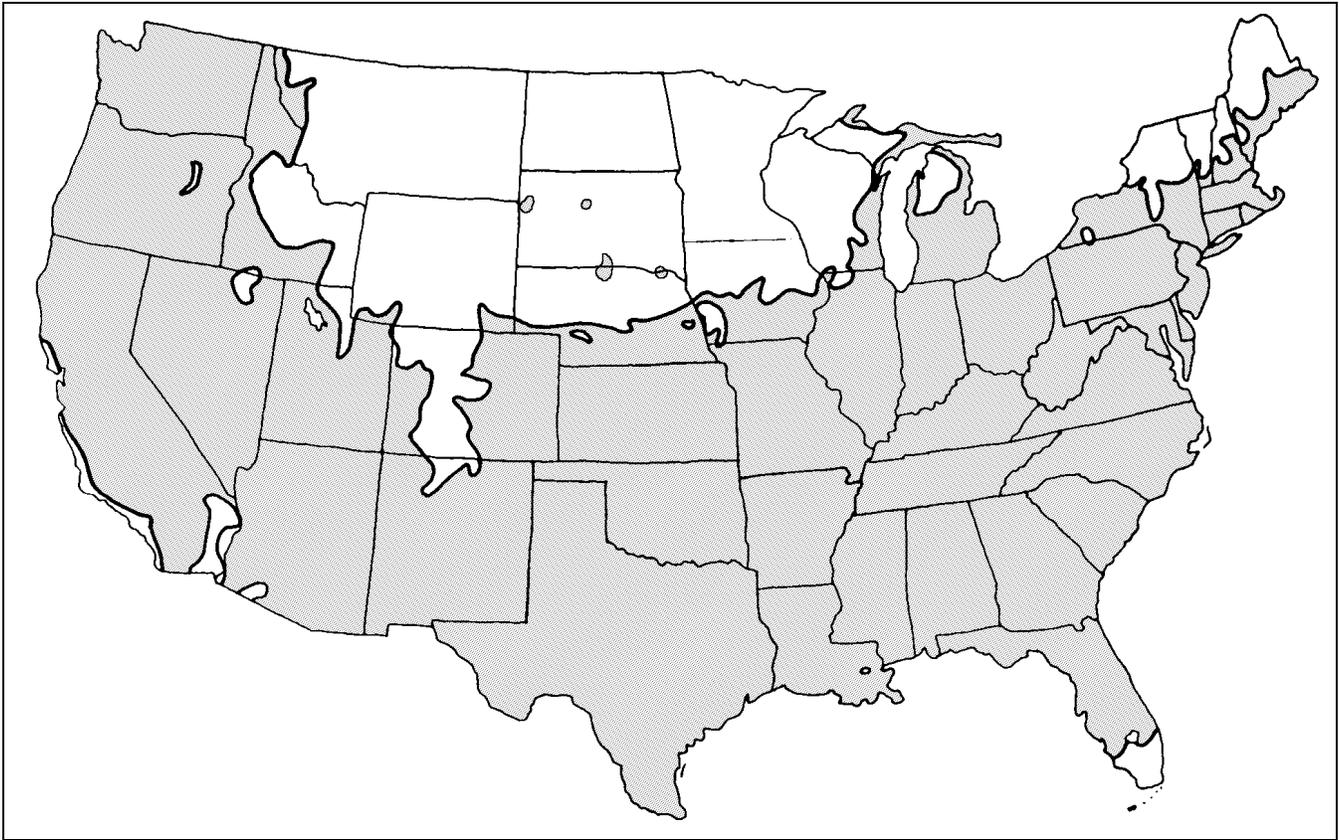


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Leaf type:** odd-pinnately compound  
**Leaf margin:** entire  
**Leaf shape:** ovate  
**Leaf venation:** pinnate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous  
**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches  
**Leaf color:** green  
**Fall color:** yellow  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** violet-blue  
**Flower characteristic:** pleasant fragrance; spring flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** pod or pod-like  
**Fruit length:** 3 to 6 inches  
**Fruit cover:** dry or hard  
**Fruit color:** brown  
**Fruit characteristic:** showy

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; can be trained to grow with a short, single trunk  
**Current year stem/twig color:** not applicable  
**Current year stem/twig thickness:** thick

**Culture**

**Light requirement:** plant grows in full sun  
**Soil tolerances:** occasionally wet; alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam  
**Drought tolerance:** high  
**Soil salt tolerances:** poor  
**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

**Other**

**Roots:** not applicable  
**Winter interest:** no special winter interest  
**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more  
**Invasive potential:** potentially invasive  
**Pest resistance:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

## Use and Management

Pruning is needed to keep this 30-foot vine contained. The vine can be seen when it is in flower in many urban areas where it has escaped its original bounds in a nearby yard. It is probably best used for training to grow onto an arbor where flowers can droop forming a showy, fragrant ceiling of color. It can be maintained as a shrub in a landscape with plenty of room provided it is pruned several times during the growing season. Avoid excessive applications of nitrogen fertilizer as these lead to foliage growth to the detriment of flowering. No fertilizer is needed in many situations.

Cultivars include: 'Alba' - white flowers; 'Jako' - white, fragrant flowers; 'Plena' - double flowers; 'Purpurea' - purplish-violet flowers.

## Pests and Diseases

No problems usually limit growth of Wisteria. However, black vine weevil may attack Wisteria. Crown gall causes formation of galls on the main roots or stems. Remove and destroy infected plants. Leaf spots may be seen, but infected leaves can be picked off. Powdery mildew coats the leaves with a white, powdery growth.

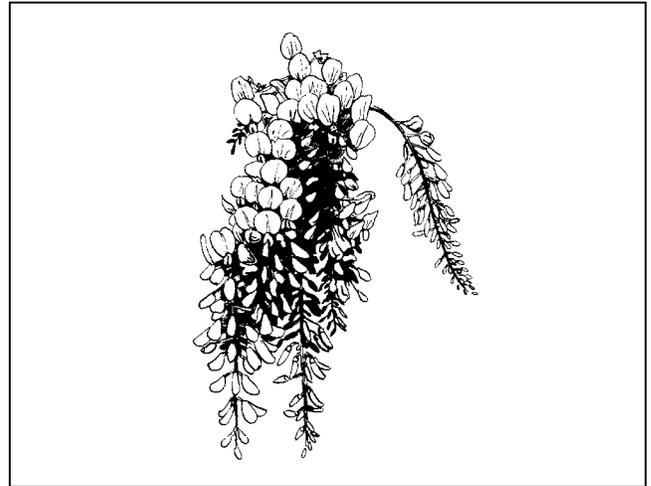


Figure 3. Flower of Chinese Wisteria