



Photinia villosa Oriental Photinia¹

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INTRODUCTION

This deciduous shrub or small tree reaches 15 to 18 feet in height with a spread of 10 feet (Fig. 1). The irregular, upright-spreading, oval, dense crown is composed of one to three-inch-long leaves which display great variety of color throughout the year. New leaves unfold as pale glimmers of sunlight brushed with pink, mature to a healthy dark green throughout the summer, then change to yellow, bronze, and vivid red in the autumn. Small, flat clusters of white flowers join the dark green leaves in late May and are followed in October by bright red berries, which persist on the plant into the winter, if not devoured by birds.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Photinia villosa*

Pronunciation: foe-TIN-nee-uh vill-LOE-suh

Common name(s): Oriental Photinia

Family: *Rosaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5 through 7 (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: container or above-ground planter; large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; screen; trainable as a standard; small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size); narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); residential street tree

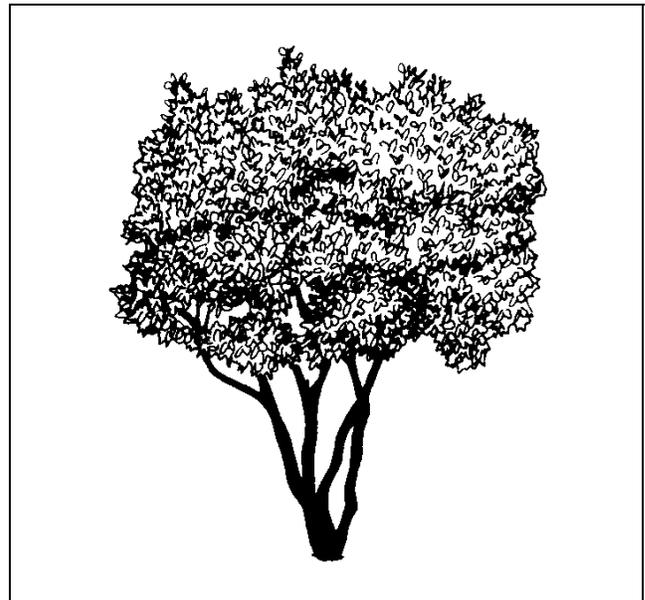


Figure 1. Middle-aged Oriental Photinia.

Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

DESCRIPTION

Height: 15 to 18 feet

Spread: 10 to 12 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

Crown shape: oval; vase shape

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: medium

Texture: medium

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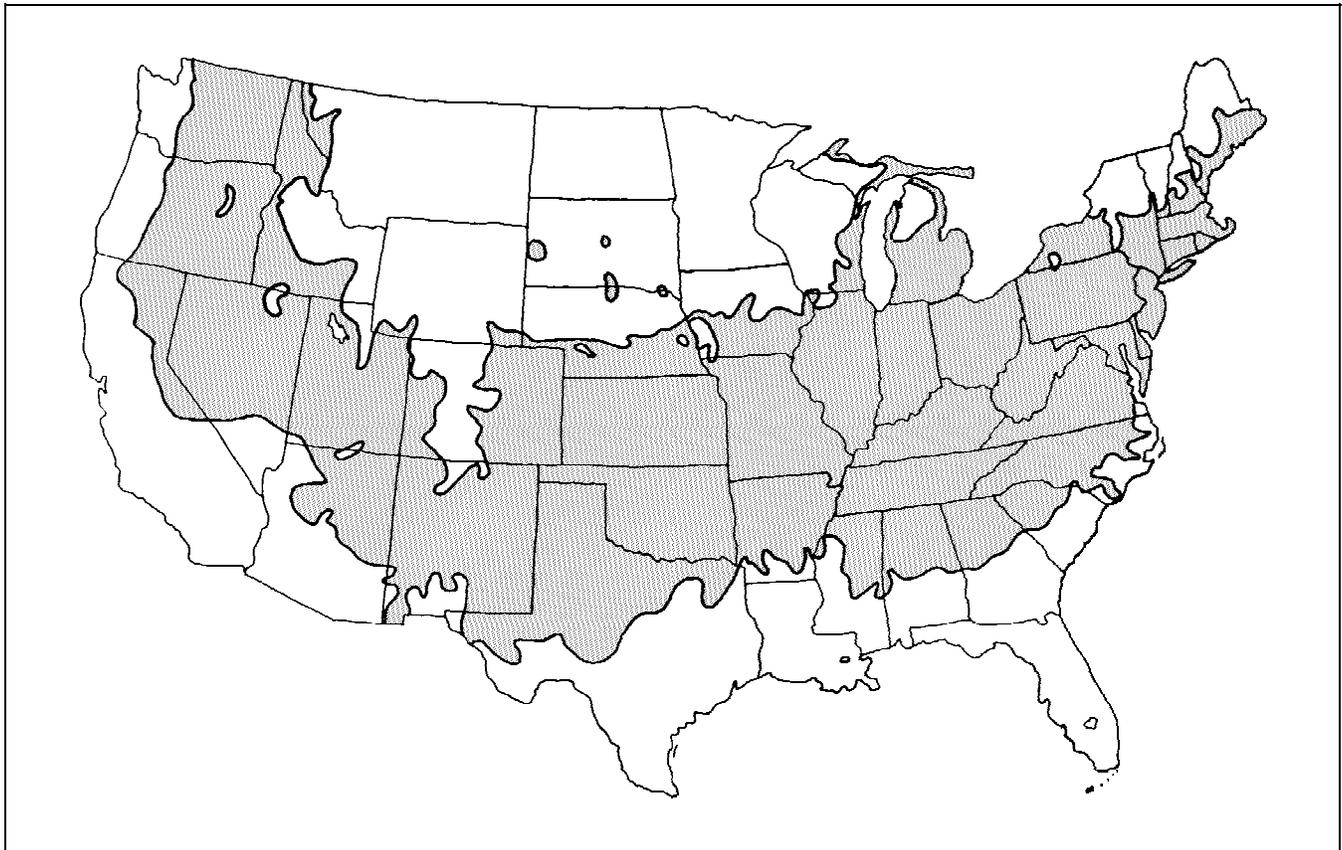


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

- Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)
- Leaf type:** simple
- Leaf margin:** serrate
- Leaf shape:** oblong; obovate
- Leaf venation:** pinnate
- Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous
- Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches
- Leaf color:** green
- Fall color:** copper; red; yellow
- Fall characteristic:** showy

Flower

- Flower color:** white
- Flower characteristics:** showy; spring flowering

Fruit

- Fruit shape:** round
- Fruit length:** < .5 inch
- Fruit covering:** fleshy
- Fruit color:** red
- Fruit characteristics:** attracts birds; no significant litter problem; persistent on the tree; showy

Trunk and Branches

- Trunk/bark/branches:** bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; grow mostly upright and will not droop; not particularly showy; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; no thorns
- Pruning requirement:** requires pruning to develop strong structure
- Breakage:** resistant
- Current year twig color:** brown
- Current year twig thickness:** medium

Culture

- Light requirement:** tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun
- Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained
- Drought tolerance:** moderate

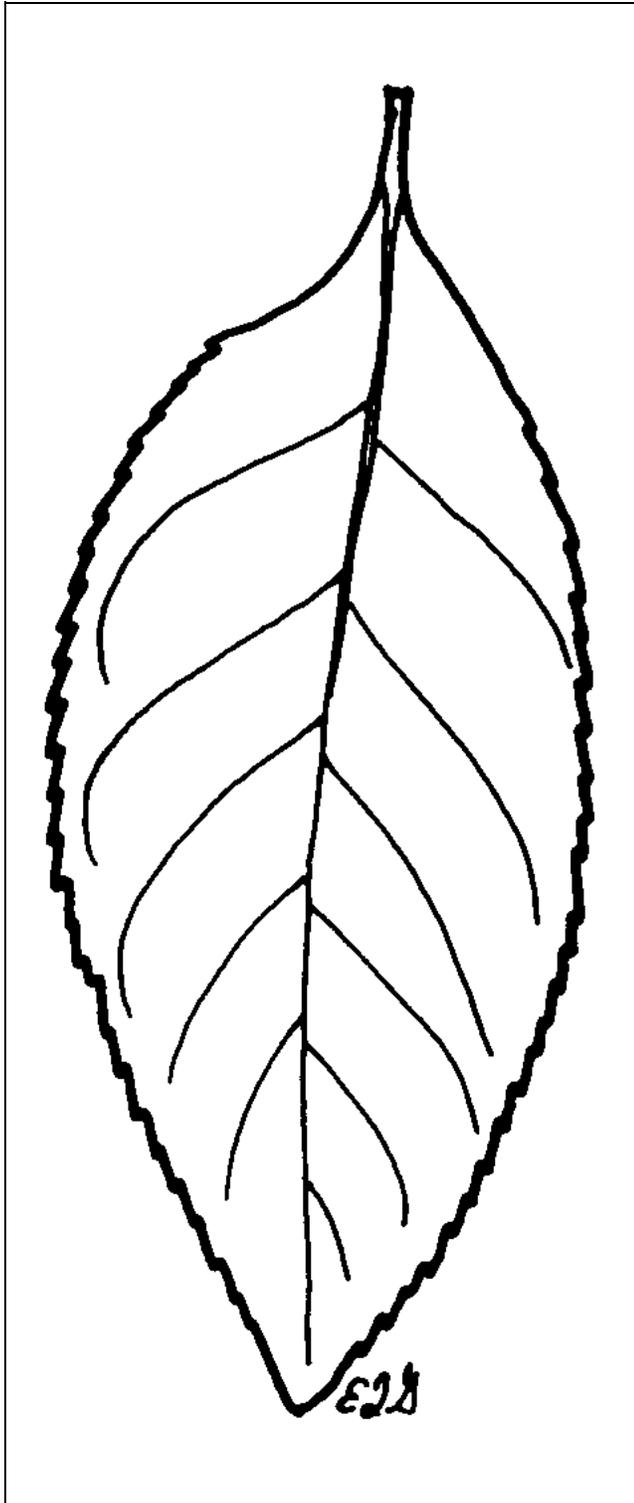


Figure 3. Foliage of Oriental Photinia.

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: susceptible

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

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Its upright form, irregular branching structure, and attractive berries make Oriental Photinia an attractive planting choice for the winter garden, specimen use, or for the mixed shrubbery border. It could also be used as a street tree if it were pruned correctly. It would be recommended for extensive planting if it were not for fireblight disease. Therefore, it is probably best used as a small tree mixed into a shrub border or in limited numbers in urban plantings. It should be tried in areas where fireblight is not a problem.

Oriental Photinia should be grown in full sun or partial shade on well-drained, acid soil.

Propagation is by cuttings or seed.

Pests

No pests are of major concern. Some caterpillars chew foliage and there may be occasional scale infestations.

Diseases

Oriental Photinia is susceptible to leaf spot, powdery mildew, and seriously damaged by fire blight.