



# *Araucaria araucana* Monkey-Puzzletree<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

Monkey-Puzzletree is a large, bizarre evergreen, 60 to 70 feet tall and 30 to 35 feet wide, which forms a loose, see-through, pyramidal shape with a straight trunk (Fig. 1). The tree is so open in habit you could almost look at it and not see it. The leaves are dark green, stiff, with sharp needles densely arranged on horizontal, irregular, upwardly-sweeping branches. Monkey-Puzzletree makes an attractive, novelty specimen for a large, open yard or commercial landscape. It is normally planted only as an oddity someplace in the rear of a landscape out of view from most passers-by but could be the specimen feature in a large oriental landscape.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Araucaria araucana*  
**Pronunciation:** air-ah-KAIR-ee-uh air-ah-KAY-nuh  
**Common name(s):** Monkey-Puzzletree  
**Family:** *Araucariaceae*  
**USDA hardiness zones:** 7B through 11 (Fig. 2)  
**Origin:** not native to North America  
**Uses:** suitable for growing indoors; specimen  
**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

## DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 60 to 70 feet  
**Spread:** 30 to 35 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette  
**Crown shape:** pyramidal  
**Crown density:** open

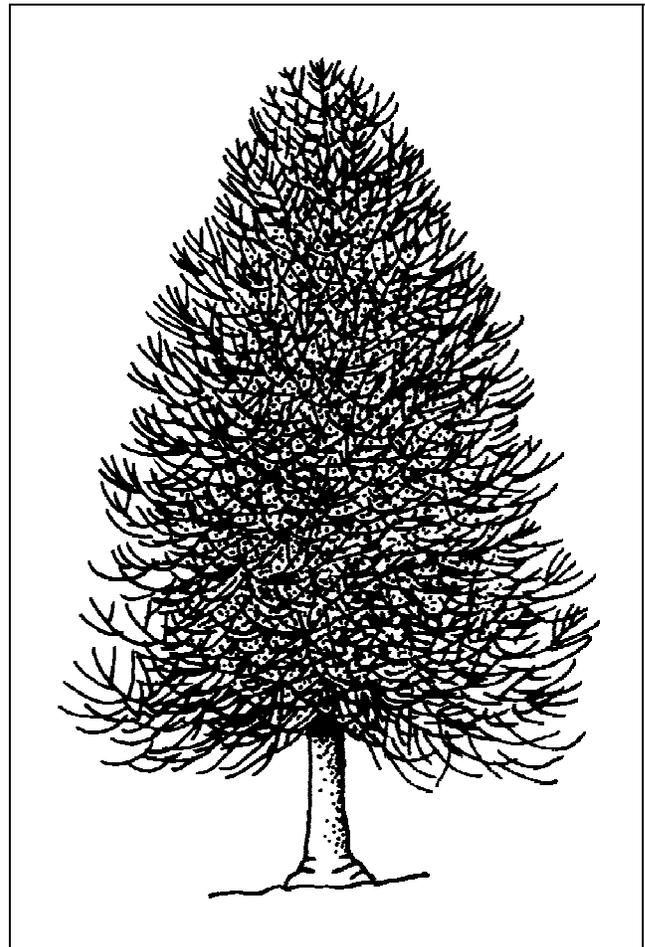


Figure 1. Mature Monkey-Puzzletree.

**Growth rate:** medium  
**Texture:** coarse

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-81, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: November 1993.
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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** spiral (Fig. 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** lanceolate; ovate

**Leaf venation:** parallel

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen; needle leaf  
evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

### Flower

**Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** 6 to 12 inches; 3 to 6 inches

**Fruit covering:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** brown; tan

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

**Pruning requirement:** needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

**Breakage:** resistant

**Current year twig color:** brown; green

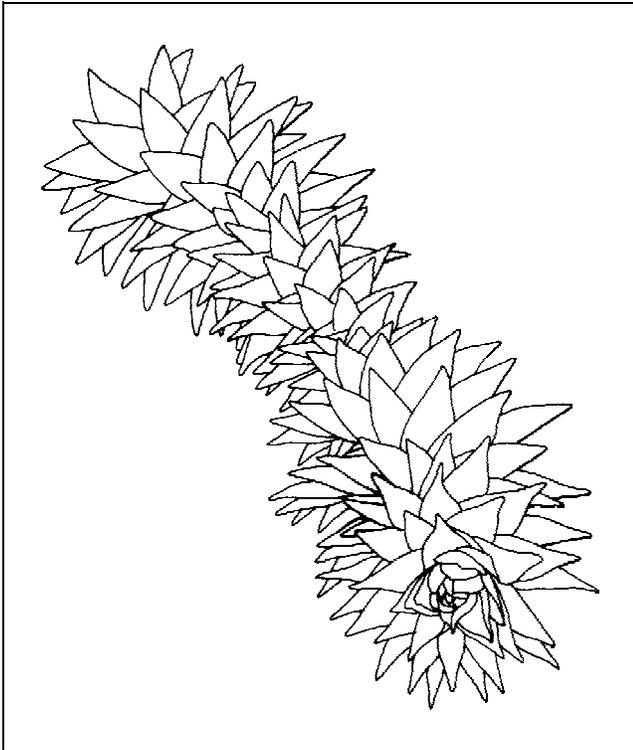
**Current year twig thickness:** medium; thick

### Culture

**Light requirement:** tree grows in full sun

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

**Drought tolerance:** moderate



**Figure 3.** Foliage of Monkey-Puzzletree.

### **Other**

**Roots:** surface roots can lift sidewalks or interfere with mowing

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding

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

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

### **USE AND MANAGEMENT**

Monkey-Puzzletree should be grown in full sun on well-drained soil and receive regular waterings. It tolerates some drought and will grow well in clay soil.

### **Pests and Diseases**

No pests or diseases are of major concern. Scales, sooty mold, leaf spots.