



Chionanthus virginicus (Fringe Tree)

Height 15' to 25'

Spread 10' to 20'

Growth rate Slow

Bloom Color White and Fragrant

Bloom Time Spring

Environment

This plant tolerates drought and occasional wetness. Suitable soil is fertile and well-drained. The pH preference is an acidic (less than 6.8) soil.

Description

This tree is famous for its sweet fragrance that is potent but never overpowering. The Fringe tree occurs in moist, rich woodlands from Pennsylvania to Florida, and west to Arkansas and Texas, often near streams. Frequently cultivated for its ornamental value, it is often used as a free standing specimen.

Culture Notes

Fringe tree looks best in a sunny spot sheltered from wind. The foliage appears more attractive when grown with several hours of shade but the tree blooms best in full sun. The tree probably does best overall with some afternoon shade. It grows very slowly, usually 6 to 10 inches per year, but can grow a foot per year if given rich, moist soil and plenty of fertilizer. Pollen from males can cause allergy problems, female's fruit but do not produce pollen. Flowers emerge from dormant buds before leaves. Trees transplanted in the fall do not grow roots until the following summer so be sure to keep new plants irrigated regularly.

Pests and Diseases

Scale can be a problem for these plants and mites can be troublesome in full sun locations. Leaf spots can be caused by several genera of fungi and Powdery mildew may attack the tree.

Maintain adequate mulch area

Clear all turf away from beneath the branches and mulch to the drip line, especially on young trees to reduce competition with turf and weeds. This will allow roots to become well established and keep plants healthier. Apply a thinner layer of mulch directly over the root ball but keep it away from the trunk. This allows rainwater, irrigation and air to easily enter the root ball and keeps the trunk dry. Placing mulch against the trunk and applying too thick a layer above the root ball can kill the plant.

Tree establishment Specifications

Choose good quality trees for planting and locate the tree properly, taking into account the ultimate size, since the tree looks best if it is not pruned to control size. The tree can enhance any landscape with its spring flush of flowers. It can be the centerpiece of your landscape if properly located.

The most common cause of young tree failure is planting too deep. In most instances, the point where the top most roots in the root ball originate from the trunk should be located just above the soil surface.

Trees with good, strong structure need no pruning at planting, except to remove broken twigs. Do not remove branches to compensate for root loss, research has shown that this can be detrimental to establishment.