**Introduction**

Spicewood is an upright shrub or small tree with a unique spicy fragrance that gives this plant its more popular common name (Fig. 1). This member of the Myrtle family has small light green, glossy leaves that have a pink to red tinge when young. The flowers open when a small lid flips up from the floral cup. These mostly inconspicuous, spring and summer blooms are white to beige in color and have a pleasant fragrance. The fruits change from green to orange, red, yellow, and then black. The tree and the fruits are appealing to many species of birds; the smaller birds use the tree as cover.

**General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Calyptranthes pallens*

**Pronunciation:** kal-lip-TRANTH-eez PAL-lenz

**Common name(s):** Spicewood, Pale Lidflower

**Family:** Myrtaceae

**Plant type:** tree

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10B through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** native to Florida

**Uses:** trained as a standard; screen; border; espalier; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; superior hedge

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**Calyptranthes pallens** Spicewood, Pale Lidflower

**Figure 2.** Shaded area represents potential planting range.

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

**Description**

**Height:** 10 to 15 feet

**Spread:** 6 to 10 feet

**Plant habit:** oval

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** medium

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** ovate

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** white

**Flower characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering; summer flowering; fall flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** oval

**Fruit length:** unknown

**Fruit cover:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** red; yellow; black

**Fruit characteristic:** attracts birds

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Calyptranthes pallens Spicewood, Pale Lidflower

**Trunk and Branches**

*Trunk/bark/branches:* not particularly showy; typically multitrunked or clumping stems

*Current year stem/twig color:* brown

*Current year stem/twig thickness:* thin

**Culture**

*Light requirement:* plant grows in part shade/part sun

*Soil tolerances:* occasionally wet; acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay

*Drought tolerance:* moderate

*Soil salt tolerances:* unknown

*Plant spacing:* 36 to 60 inches

**Other**

*Roots:* usually not a problem

*Winter interest:* no special winter interest

*Outstanding plant:* not particularly outstanding

*Invasive potential:* not known to be invasive

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

**Use and Management**

Spicewood may be used as a specimen, or can be clipped into a hedge or maintained as a foundation plant. It can be trained into a small, multi-trunk tree.

Spicewood prefers a full sun to light shade location in the landscape. It is adaptable to many soils and is moderately drought tolerant. However, this plant grows best in moist to wet areas.

**Pests and Diseases**

No pests or diseases are of major concern.