Introduction

Delicate orange flowers borne in the axil of the opposite, simple leaves put on a spectacular show in the early part of the warm summer months (Fig. 1). The flowering period can be extended into the fall in some years. Good growing conditions in partial to full sun results in dense foliage growth with flowers borne on the tips of new growth. Shoots can extend several feet from the fence or other structure supporting the vine. Plan on this when locating the vine since regular clipping will remove the flowers.

General Information

Scientific name: *Combretum fruticosum*

Pronunciation: kom-BREE-tum froo-tick-KOE-sum

Common name(s): Orange Flame Vine

Family: *Combretaceae*

Plant type: vine

USDA hardiness zones: 9B through 11 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Figure 1. Orange Flame Vine.

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: trained as a standard; espalier

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


2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, 32611.
Combretum fruticosum Orange Flame Vine

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Description**

**Height:** depends upon supporting structure

**Spread:** 10 to 20 feet

**Plant habit:** spreading; round

**Plant density:** moderate

**Growth rate:** fast

**Texture:** medium

**Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** elliptic (oval)

**Leaf venation:** pinnate

**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 4 to 8 inches

**Leaf color:** green

**Fall color:** no fall color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

**Flower color:** orange

**Flower characteristic:** summer flowering; fall flowering

**Fruit**

**Fruit shape:** unknown

**Fruit length:** unknown

**Fruit cover:** unknown

**Fruit color:** unknown

**Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

**Trunk and Branches**

**Trunk/bark/branches:** not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

Archival copy: for current recommendations see http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu or your local extension office.
Combretum fruticosum Orange Flame Vine

Current year stem/twig color: reddish

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

**Culture**

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

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

**Drought tolerance:** moderate

**Soil salt tolerances:** poor

**Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

**Other**

**Roots:** usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

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

**Use and Management**

Orange Flame Vine can also be grown as a loose shrub, becoming at least 10 to 15 feet wide and 6 to 8 feet tall. It can be planted 5 to 8 feet apart to form a solid mass within a couple of years after planting. It makes a good soil stabilizer for steep slopes.

Supply the plant with regular irrigation during dry weather to maintain good growth and flowering. Periodic fertilization during the year also helps keep the plant in flower. Other species exist including *Combretum grandiflorum* which has red flowers and reddish new growth.

**Pests and Diseases**

No major insect or disease problems are known to affect the plant at this time.