

Indigofera cylindrica¹

Edward F. Gilman²

Introduction

Indigo has pinnately compound leaves borne on slender, green stems typical of many plants in the legume family. Its upright growth habit eventually forms a rounded vase shape canopy about 6 feet tall.

General Information

Scientific name: *Indigofera cylindrica*

Pronunciation: in-dig-GOFF-fur-uh sil-LIN-drick-uh

Common name(s): indigo

Family: *Leguminaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 10 through 11 (Fig. 1)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: specimen; border

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

Description

Height: 4 to 8 feet

Spread: 5 to 7 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: odd-pinnately compound

Leaf margin: entire

1. This document is FPS-282, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date October, 1999. Reviewed May, 2007. Visit the EDIS Web Site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

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



Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: pink

Flower characteristic: showy

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: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; not particularly showy

Current year stem/twig color: green

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

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

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: sprouts from roots or lower trunk

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

Fine-textured foliage and a neat habit makes this a good candidate for specimen planting in the garden. Young plants may be sparsely branched, but a little heading on the main stems in the spring or summer increases canopy density and branchiness. It also makes a nice candidate for planting in a container for display on the deck or patio, or by an entrance to your home or business. The unusual texture gives it a means to stand out in a shrub border or other mass planting.

Full sun to part shade give the best growth. The plant appears to adapt to a wide range of soil pH.