

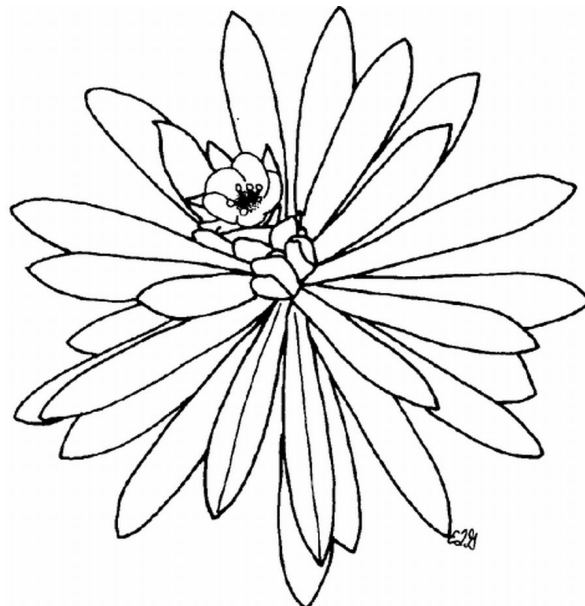
## ***Suriana maritima* Bay Cedar<sup>1</sup>**

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Edward F. Gilman<sup>2</sup>

### **Introduction**

The bay cedar is endemic to south Florida, the Caribbean, Central America and the Bahamas (Fig. 1). It was commonly found growing in thickets, on sand dunes and rocky shores, often just back of the high tide line, but is now on the endangered plants list. This 5- to 20-foot-tall plant has a sturdy, branched trunk that has beautiful, dark brown, rough, flaky bark; the wood of this tree is very hard and heavy. Branches arch gracefully and hold the evergreen leaves on short, upturned twigs. The tiny, gray-green leaves are fleshy and minutely downy; the new leaves and twigs are particularly downy. Yellow, cup-shaped flowers may occur singly or in clusters that are inconspicuously set among the leaves. These small flowers occur consistently throughout the year. The seeds of the bay cedar are held in a small, brown, five-pointed calyx.



**Figure 1.** Bay cedar

**Family:** *Surianaceae*

**Plant type:** shrub

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

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

### **General Information**

**Scientific name:** *Suriana maritima*

**Pronunciation:** ser-ree-AY-nuh muh-RIT-tim-muh

**Common name(s):** bay cedar

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



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

**Origin:** native to Florida

**Uses:** container or above-ground planter; superior hedge; mass planting; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; border; attracts butterflies

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

### Description

**Height:** 5 to 20 feet

**Spread:** 5 to 8 feet

**Plant habit:** oval

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** moderate

**Texture:** fine

### Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** spatulate

**Leaf venation:** none, or difficult to see

**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:** yellow

**Flower characteristic:** flowers periodically throughout the year

### Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch

**Fruit cover:** dry or hard

**Fruit color:** brown

**Fruit characteristic:** attracts birds

### Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/bark/branches:** typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; showy

**Current year stem/twig color:** brown

**Current year stem/twig thickness:** medium

### Culture

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

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

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Soil salt tolerances:** good

**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:** no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

### Use and Management

Bay cedar is not commonly used in the landscape but could function as a specimen or border plant in beach locations. It has been used as a hedge because it responds well to clipping. Left to grow on its own, bay cedar can be trained into a small tree for a specimen planting in the landscape or in a container. Planted in a row on 5- to 6-foot centers, it functions as a screen.

Bay cedar has a high tolerance for salt and wind and is ideal for coastal landscapes. It will grow well in well-drained, sandy soils without irrigation once established, and needs to be placed in a mostly sunny location.

Bay cedar is currently propagated by seed.

### Pest and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.