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Cornus walteri: Walter Dogwood[1]

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Introduction

Walter Dogwood is a medium-sized deciduous tree reaching 30 to 40 feet in height and width. The two to five-inch-long leaves are dark green and are joined in June by the small white flowers arranged in two to three-inch diameter cymes. The blossoms are followed by the production of small black fruits which are popular with birds and other wildlife. Walter Dogwood is probably best known for the alligator-like bark on older specimens, even more so than Flowering Dogwood. Young specimens have an upright branching habit giving way to an open spreading habit. The branches probably droop less than most other Dogwoods, making it a possible candidate for street tree use although they have not been tested for this in the United States. Most certainly a good patio tree providing shade quickly.

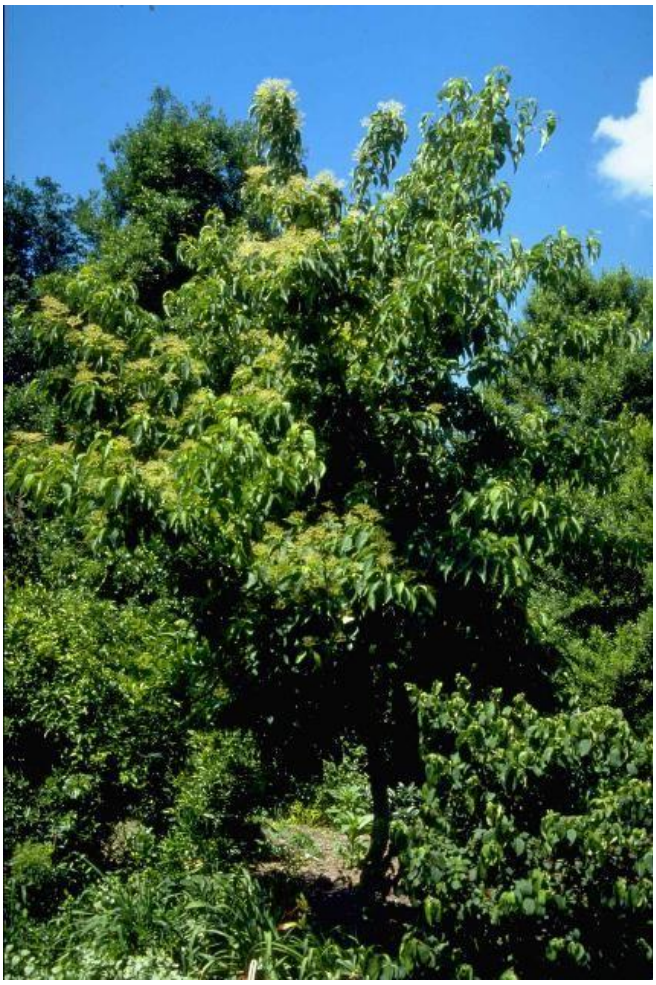


Figure 1. Mature *Cornus walteri*: Walter Dogwood
Credit: Ed Gilman

General Information

Scientific name: *Cornus walteri*

Pronunciation: KOR-nus WALL-ter-eye

Common name(s): Walter Dogwood

Family: *Cornaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5A through 8A (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: little invasive potential

Uses: shade; street without sidewalk; deck or patio

Availability: not native to North America

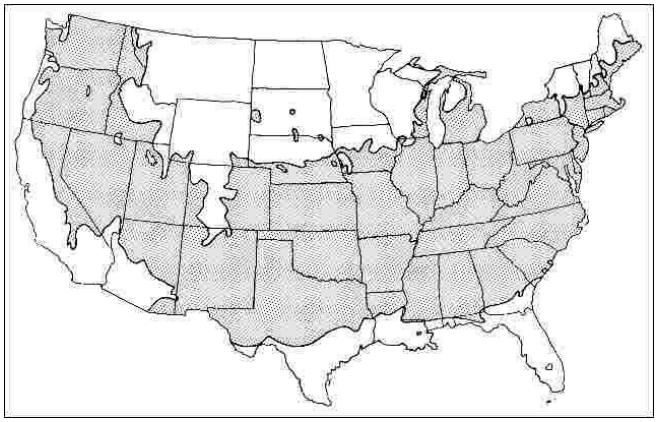


Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 30 to 40 feet

Spread: 30 to 40 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: vase

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: serrate, serrulate

Leaf shape: ovate

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches, 4 to 8 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: red

Fall characteristic: showy

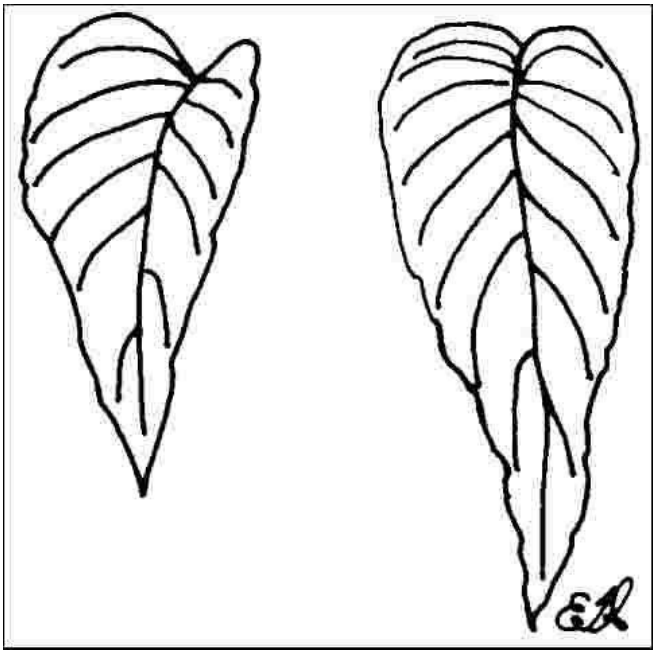


Figure 3. Foliage

Flower

Flower color: white/cream/gray

Flower characteristics: showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: less than .5 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: black

Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches don't droop; showy; typically one trunk; thorns

Pruning requirement: little required

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: medium

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun, partial sun or partial shade

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; acidic; slightly alkaline; well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: unknown

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management

Grown in the full sun it develops a dense canopy but is more open and perhaps more attractive in partial shade. The plant is now rare in the industry but deserves to be tried. It is highly drought tolerant and grows well in clay soil.

Propagation is by cuttings or seed.

Pests

No pests are of major concern at this time.

Diseases

Possibly leaf spot, twig blight, or canker. See diseases section of Flowering Dogwood.

[1] This document is ENH358, one of a series of the UF/IFAS Department of Environmental Horticulture. Original publication date November 1993. Revised December 2006. Reviewed February 2014. Visit the Ask IFAS website at https://ask.ifas.ufl.edu for the currently supported version of this publication. © UF/IFAS. This publication is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 *To learn more about creating and maintaining attractive landscapes that protect Florida's water and natural resources, visit ffl.ifas.ufl.edu/.*

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