UF IFAS Extension UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ PROGRAM

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Hydrangea paniculata: Panicle Hydrangea[1]

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Introduction

This low-branching, multiple-trunked tree or large shrub is fast-growing and capable of reaching 15 to 25 feet in height with a spread of 10 to 20 feet but is often seen at about 10 feet. The dark green, deciduous leaves are three to six inches long and 1.5 to 3 inches wide, and fade only to a sickly yellow in fall before dropping. The spectacular summertime blooms appear in six to eight-inch-long panicles, the cream-colored flowers gradually fading over time to purplish-pink. The upright, spreading branches often bend down with the weight of the blooms, and the brown, faded blooms should be removed in late September to keep the tree from looking unkempt. If unpruned some people object to the pinkish brown fruits and old flowers which hang on to the tree during the winter. Pruning also is suggested to keep the plant to a consistent, neat shape.



Figure 1. Mature *Hydrangea paniculata*: Panicle Hydrangea
Credit: Ed Gilman

General Information

Scientific name: *Hydrangea paniculata*

Pronunciation: high-DRAN-jee-uh pan-ick-yoo-LAY-tuh

Common name(s): Panicle Hydrangea

Family: *Hydrangeaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 4A through 8A (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: little invasive potential

Uses: hedge; specimen; deck or patio; trained as a standard; container or planter; screen

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

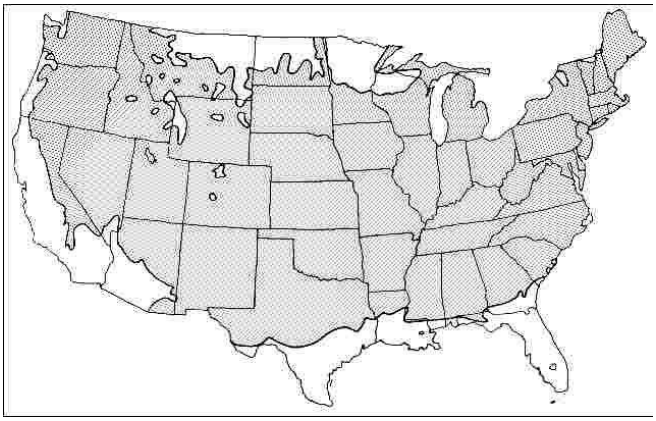

Figure 2. Range

Description

Height: 15 to 25 feet

Spread: 10 to 20 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular

Crown shape: vase

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: serrate

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval), ovate

Leaf venation: pinnate, brachidodrome, bowed

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

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

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow

Fall characteristic: not showy

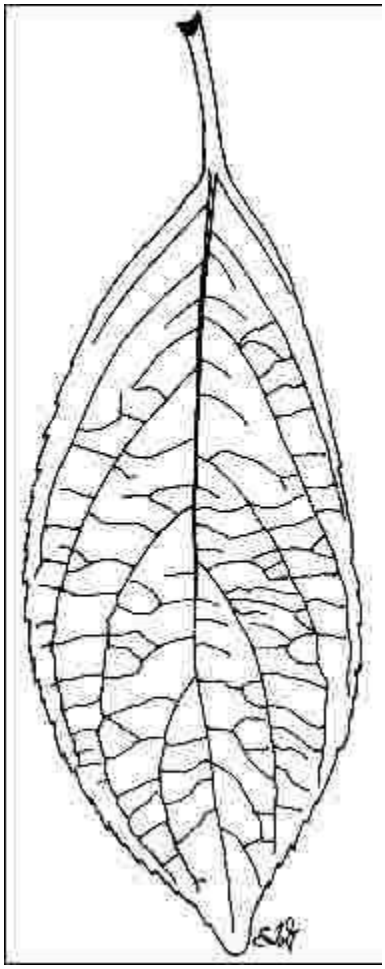

Figure 3. Foliage

Flower

Flower color: white/cream/gray

Flower characteristics: very showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated, oval

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown, pink

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches droop; not showy; typically multi-trunked; thorns

Pruning requirement: needed for strong structure

Breakage: susceptible to breakage

Current year twig color: brown, gray

Current year twig thickness: thick

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun, partial sun or partial shade

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

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: unknown

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: yes

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: sensitive to pests/diseases

Use and Management

Panicle Hydrangea can be used in a shrub border as a large sized accent shrub. It may be best to locate it away from the house due to its large size and spreading habit. Lower branches can be pruned to clean up the bottom of the plant and make it grow into a multi-stemmed tree. Early training can create a single-stemmed small tree

which would be well suited for planting as a specimen in a low ground cover or lawn area. They are also suited for planting in above-ground containers for displaying the nice flowers which develop in the summer.

Panicle Hydrangea should be grown in full sun or partial shade on well-drained, moist, loamy soil. Plants are fuller in the sun.

Propagation is by softwood cuttings which root quickly in a medium of sand and peat.

Pests

Aphids, rose chafer, oystershell scale, two-spotted mites, and nematodes.

Diseases

Bacterial wilt, bud blight, leaf spot, powdery mildew, and rust.

[1] This document is ENH457, one of a series of the UF/IFAS Department of Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension. 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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