



Bischofia javanica Toog Tree¹

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INTRODUCTION

This rapidly growing evergreen or semievergreen tree can reach a height of 75 feet but usually is seen 40 to 50 feet tall in Florida, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands (Fig. 1). The dense rounded crown and thick trunk makes toog tree a popular shade tree. However, enough light will not penetrate for a lawn to grow underneath toog trees but a groundcover will serve nicely, helping to cover the exposed tree roots. Branching is typically coarse with several large-diameter laterals originating fairly close to the ground. The shiny, bronze-toned, green trifoliate leaves are especially attractive when young and reach two to five inches in length. The stem will exude a milky sap when wounded. Small blue-black or reddish berries are produced in copious drooping clusters and drop to the ground creating a mess following the inconspicuous flowers on female trees. Unfortunately, the sex of the tree cannot be determined on young plants.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Bischofia javanica*

Pronunciation: biss-CHOFF-ee-uh juh-VAN-ih-kuh

Common name(s): Toog Tree, Bischofia

Family: *Euphorbiaceae*

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

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: not recommended for planting

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

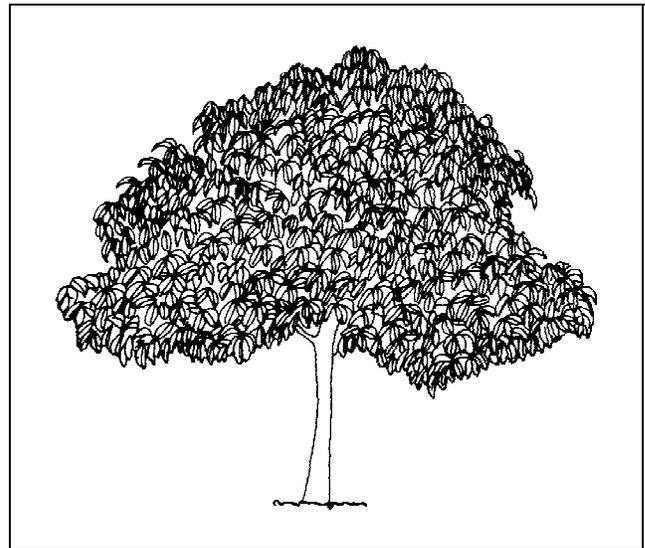


Figure 1. Middle-aged Toog Tree.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 30 to 50 feet

Spread: 25 to 35 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

Crown shape: round

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

- Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)
- Leaf type:** odd pinnately compound; trifoliate
- Leaflet margin:** serrulate
- Leaflet shape:** elliptic (oval); ovate
- Leaflet venation:** pinnate
- Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen
- Leaflet blade length:** 4 to 8 inches; 2 to 4 inches
- Leaf color:** green
- Fall color:** no fall color change
- Fall characteristic:** not showy

Flower

- Flower color:** green
- Flower characteristics:** inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

Fruit

- Fruit shape:** round
- Fruit length:** < .5 inch
- Fruit covering:** fleshy
- Fruit color:** black; red

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter; persistent on the tree; showy

Trunk and Branches

- Trunk/bark/branches:** bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns
- Pruning requirement:** requires pruning to develop strong structure
- Breakage:** susceptible to breakage either at the crotch due to poor collar formation, or the wood itself is weak and tends to break
- Current year twig color:** green
- Current year twig thickness:** medium

Culture

- Light requirement:** tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun
- Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; acidic; alkaline; extended flooding; well-drained

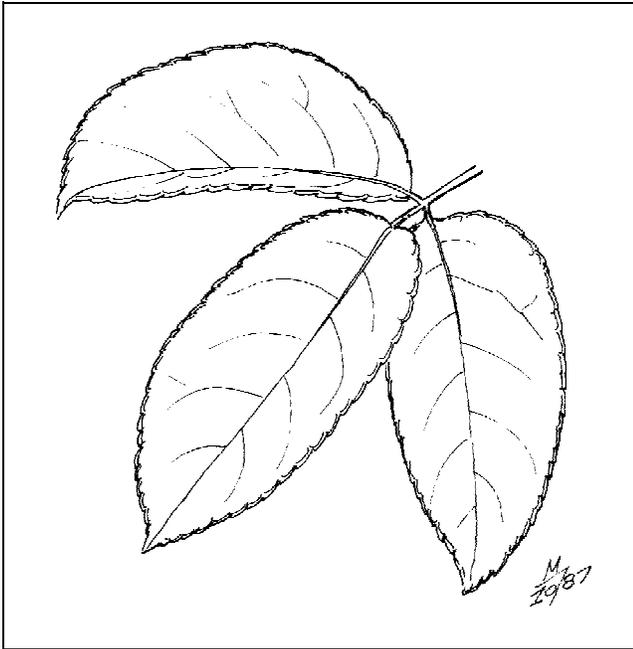


Figure 3. Foliage of Toog Tree.

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: surface roots can lift sidewalks or interfere with mowing

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: No entries found.

Pest resistance: very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect tree health or aesthetics

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Growing in full sun on various soil types, toog tree is very easily grown and grows quickly. It has only moderate salt tolerance. It appears to grow well in confined urban soil spaces, however, the fruit is considered messy and stains walks when it drops to the ground and the seeds often germinate in the landscape and could become a nuisance. Aggressive roots can lift sidewalks if they are planted within five or six feet of the walk. If you plant this tree, locate it in a lawn area where regular mowing will kill the sprouting seedlings, not in a landscape bed. The tree is not generally recommended for street tree planting and can be a nuisance in lawns as surface roots make mowing difficult close to the trunk. Branches reportedly break from the tree on occasion. There are too many other high quality trees available in USDA

hardiness zones 10 and 11 to encourage planting this tree.

Propagation is by seeds or cuttings.

Pests

Toog tree suffers from severe scale infestations, especially false Oleander scale which is followed by sooty mold.

Diseases

No diseases are of major concern, except root rot.