**Jacaranda mimosifolia**

**Jacaranda**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Soft, delicate, fernlike, deciduous foliage and dense terminal clusters of lavender-blue, lightly fragrant, trumpet-shaped flowers make this large, spreading tree an outstanding specimen planting (Fig. 1). The striking blooms can appear any time from April through August (most often May), and are sometimes present before the fresh, new, light green leaves appear in spring. Flowering is reportedly best following a winter with several nights in the upper 30’s. Jacaranda may flower best when grown in poor soil. Jacarandas can reach 25 to 40 feet in height with an equal or greater spread, and the bent or arching trunks are covered with light grey bark.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Scientific name:** Jacaranda mimosifolia  
**Pronunciation:** jack-uh-RAN-duh  
mih-moe-sih-FOLE-ee-uh  
**Common name(s):** Jacaranda  
**Family:** Bignoniaceae  
**USDA hardiness zones:** 9B through 11 (Fig. 2)  
**Origin:** not native to North America  
**Uses:** large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); shade tree; specimen; residential street tree; no proven urban tolerance  
**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

**DESCRIPTION**

**Height:** 25 to 40 feet  
**Spread:** 45 to 60 feet  
**Crown uniformity:** irregular outline or silhouette  
**Crown shape:** spreading; vase shape  
**Crown density:** open  
**Growth rate:** fast  
**Texture:** fine
Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Foliage**

- **Leaf arrangement:** alternate (Fig. 3)
- **Leaf type:** bipinnately compound; odd pinnately compound
- **Leaflet margin:** entire
- **Leaflet shape:** obovate; rhomboid
- **Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous
- **Leaflet blade length:** less than 2 inches
- **Leaf color:** green
- **Fall color:** no fall color change
- **Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

- **Flower color:** lavender; purple
- **Flower characteristics:** pleasant fragrance; spring flowering; summer flowering; very showy

**Fruit**

- **Fruit shape:** pod; round
- **Fruit length:** 1 to 3 inches
- **Fruit covering:** dry or hard
- **Fruit color:** brown

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

**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; showy trunk; 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:** brown; gray
- **Current year twig thickness:** thick

**Culture**

- **Light requirement:** tree grows in full sun
- **Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained
- **Drought tolerance:** high
- **Aerosol salt tolerance:** none
Other

**Roots:** surface roots can lift sidewalks or interfere with mowing  
**Winter interest:** no special winter interest  
**Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time  
**Pest resistance:** long-term health usually not affected by pests

**USE AND MANAGEMENT**

The light, dappled shade makes Jacaranda well-suited for cooling patios, but it probably should not be used near pools due to the abundant leaf and flower drop. Jacaranda makes an ideal street tree, creating a spectacular sight when in full bloom. The arching branch habit is ideal for creating a canopy over a street or boulevard. Be sure to plant only those trees which have one central trunk and major limbs well-spaced apart for street tree and other high-use areas. Unpruned trees can become hazardous as they split apart at the crotches. Once properly trained and pruned, Jacaranda is fairly strong-wooded and less messy than Royal Poinciana.

Heaviest-flowering when grown in full sun, small trees of Jacaranda can tolerate light shade and will grow quickly. They thrive in sandy, well-drained soils but should be watered during dry periods. Prune branches so they remain less than half the diameter of the trunk to help keep the plant intact and increase durability.

‘Alba’ is a white-flowered cultivar which has a longer blooming period but sparser blooms. There are other cultivars available.

Propagation is by softwood cuttings, grafting, or by seed. Seedlings often take a long time to bloom so grafted trees or those rooted from cuttings are preferred.

**Pests**

No pests are of major concern.

**Diseases**

Mushroom root rot is a problem on poorly-drained soil.