INTRODUCTION

*Podocarpus latifolius* grows in an upright, weeping habit to 100 feet tall in its native habitat, but in open landscapes may be much smaller (Fig. 1). It would be a good selection for narrow overhead spaces due to the narrow branch crown. The blue-green foliage and striking habit make this an obvious candidate for planting as a specimen in a formal landscape. Unfortunately, it is not available in the nursery trade.

GENERAL INFORMATION

**Scientific name:** *Podocarpus latifolius*

**Pronunciation:** poe-doe-KAR-pus lat-ih-FOLE-ee-us

**Common name(s):** Podocarpus

**Family:** Podocarpaceae

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

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; screen; specimen; no proven urban tolerance

**Availability:** grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

DESCRIPTION

**Height:** 40 to 75 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:** pyramidal

**Crown density:** dense

Figure 1. Mature Podocarpus.

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** fine
Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite; spiral (Fig. 3)
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: linear; oblong
Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches
Leaf color: blue or blue-green; green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: 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: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure
Breakage: resistant
Current year twig color: green
Current year twig thickness: thick

Flower

Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: irregular; round
Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch
Fruit covering: fleshy
Fruit color: green

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; acidic; well-drained
Drought tolerance: moderate
Pests and Diseases

The tree has not been grown much and the pest and disease problems are poorly understood.

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time
Pest resistance: unknown

USE AND MANAGEMENT

The tree prefers a rich, moist soil, and benefits from irrigation in dry weather. Trees benefit from a layer of mulch extending beyond the edge of the branches. This keeps roots cool and reduces moisture loss from the soil. Grows in full sun or the shade on the north side of a building. This tree has not been grown in nurseries but should be tried.