INTRODUCTION

Capable of reaching 50 feet in height, Korean Stewartia is most often seen at 20 to 30 feet, its short, interwoven branchlets forming a dense, pyramidal canopy which casts deep shade below this deciduous tree (Fig. 1). The one to four-inch-long by one to three-inch-wide dark green leaves often turn to lovely shades of orange, red, or purple in the fall but this is not a reliable occurrence. Over a several week period in June to July, Korean Stewartia is decorated with lovely, pure white, yellow-centered blossoms, three-inches-across and flattened, appearing much like a single camellia flower. Each flower is open for about 24 hours and they attract bees. Most other trees have finished flowering by the time these flowers emerge. The bark of Korean Stewartia is probably the most outstanding characteristic, with orange/brown patches showing through the flaking, grey bark.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: Stewartia koreana
Pronunciation: stoo-AR-tee-uh kor-ee-AH-NUH
Common name(s): Korean Stewartia
Family: Theaceae
USDA hardness zones: 5B through 7 (Fig. 2)
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: container or above-ground planter; espalier; large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; narrow tree

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

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-601, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
2. Edward F. Gilman, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.
DESCRIPTION

Height: 20 to 30 feet
Spread: 15 to 25 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms
Crown shape: pyramidal; upright
Crown density: dense
Growth rate: slow
Texture: medium

Foliage
Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: serrate
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)
Leaf venation: banchidodrome; pinnate
Leaf type and persistence: deciduous
Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches; less than 2 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: orange; purple; red
Fall characteristic: showy

Flower
Flower color: white
Flower characteristics: showy; summer flowering

Fruit
Fruit shape: oval; round
Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches
Fruit covering: dry or hard
Fruit color: red
Fruit characteristics: attracts birds; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

Trunk and Branches
Trunk/bark/branches: bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; grow mostly upright and will not droop; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; very showy trunk; no thorns
Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure
Breakage: resistant
Current year twig color: green; gray

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.
Current year twig thickness: medium; thin

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

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: no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

This tree can be used in much the same way as Japanese Stewartia. It is unsurpassed as a specimen, but can also be included in a shrub border, planted near a patio or deck to show off the wonderful bark, or used as a multi-trunked street tree planted on 20-foot centers. Set it off as a specimen by placing it in a bed of low, evergreen ground cover.

Korean Stewartia should be grown in full sun but reportedly looks best where it can receive some shade during the hottest part of the day. However, there are fine-looking specimens growing in poor clay soil in USDA hardiness zone 7b with no irrigation which are located in full-day sun. The soil should preferably be moist, acid, and supplemented with organic matter. Pruning is seldom required as growth rate is slow and branches normally keep in bounds, staying close to the tight canopy.

Propagation is by seed (with difficulty) or by cuttings.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases of major concern.