Terminalia muelleri
Muellers Terminalia

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INTRODUCTION

This is a small, 30-foot-tall, deciduous tree which forms a symmetrical, horizontally-layered silhouette from an arrow-straight trunk (Fig. 1). The leathery, four-inch-long leaves turn attractively red in autumn and winter before dropping. In spring, the trees are decorated with spikes of tiny greenish-white blossoms which are followed by dark blue, small fruits. This tree is probably well suited for a street tree and other urban planting sites where a small tree is needed. It would also make a nice addition to the small residential lot as a specimen tree or small shade tree for a patio or deck.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: Terminalia muelleri
Pronunciation: ter-mih-NAIL-ee-uh MULL-er-eye
Common name(s): Muellers Terminalia
Family: Combretaceae
USDA hardiness zones: 10B through 11 (Fig. 2)
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); 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 lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); no proven urban tolerance
Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

DESCRIPTION

Height: 30 to 35 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: vase shape
Crown density: moderate
Growth rate: medium
Texture: medium

Figure 1. Middle-aged Muellers Terminalia.
Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Foliage**
- **Leaf arrangement:** alternate
- **Leaf type:** simple
- **Leaf margin:** entire
- **Leaf shape:** obovate
- **Leaf venation:** reticulate
- **Leaf type and persistence:** deciduous
- **Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches
- **Leaf color:** green
- **Fall color:** red
- **Fall characteristic:** showy

**Flower**
- **Flower color:** white
- **Flower characteristics:** showy; spring flowering

**Fruit**
- **Fruit shape:** oval
- **Fruit length:** .5 to 1 inch
- **Fruit covering:** dry or hard
- **Fruit color:** blue
- **Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter

**Trunk and Branches**
- **Trunk/bark/branches:** grow mostly upright and will not droop; 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:** thin

**Culture**
- **Light requirement:** tree grows in full sun
- **Soil tolerances:** clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained
- **Drought tolerance:** moderate
- **Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate
Other

**Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no special winter interest  
**Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding  
**Invasive potential:** No entries found.  
**Pest resistance:** no pests are normally seen on the tree

**USE AND MANAGEMENT**

*Terminalia muelleri* should be grown in full sun on any well-drained soil, tolerating acid, alkaline, and even salt, and are very wind-resistant. Trees should be planted where they can be protected from frost.

Propagation is by seed.

**Pests and Diseases**

No pests or diseases are of major concern.