



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## *Raphiolepis indica*<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

This slow-growing, small, rounded evergreen shrub is ideal for any sunny garden (Fig. 1). The neat, compact growth habit seldom needs pruning and the low profile makes Indian Hawthorn well-suited as dense, large-scale groundcovers, low dividers, or informal hedges. High salt-tolerance makes Indian Hawthorn especially useful for seaside plantings.

### General Information

**Scientific name:** *Raphiolepis indica*

**Pronunciation:** raff-fee-oh-LEPP-piss IN-dick-kuh

**Common name(s):** Indian Hawthorn

**Family:** *Rosaceae*

**Plant type:** ground cover

**USDA hardiness zones:** 8 through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Planting month for zone 8:** year round

**Planting month for zone 9:** year round

**Planting month for zone 10 and 11:** year round

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** border; mass planting; container or above-ground planter; ground cover; trained as a standard; small parking lot islands (< 100 square feet in size); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size)

**Availability:** generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

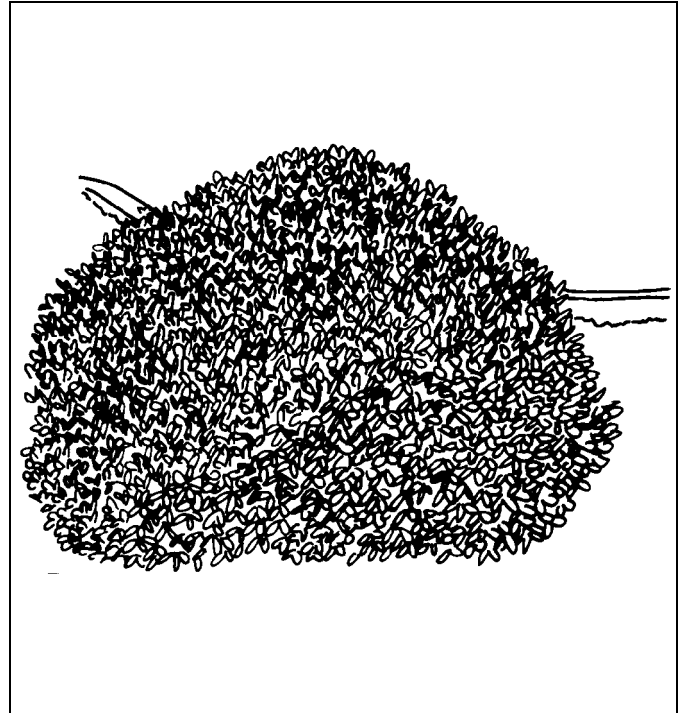


Figure 1. Indian Hawthorn.

**Spread:** 6 to 10 feet

**Plant habit:** spreading

**Plant density:** dense

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** medium

### Description

**Height:** 3 to 7 feet

1. This document is Fact Sheet FPS-498, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October, 1999 Please visit the EDIS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

**Foliage**

- Leaf arrangement:** alternate
- Leaf type:** simple
- Leaf margin:** serrate
- Leaf shape:** obovate
- Leaf venation:** pinnate
- Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen
- Leaf blade length:** 2 to 4 inches
- Leaf color:** green
- Fall color:** no fall color change
- Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**

- Flower color:** pink
- Flower characteristic:** spring flowering; pleasant fragrance; fall flowering

**Fruit**

- Fruit shape:** round
- Fruit length:** less than .5 inch
- Fruit cover:** fleshy
- Fruit color:** blue

**Fruit characteristic:** attracts birds

**Trunk and Branches**

- Trunk/bark/branches:** not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems
- Current year stem/twig color:** green
- Current year stem/twig thickness:** thick

**Culture**

- Light requirement:** plant grows in part shade/part sun
- Soil tolerances:** alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam
- Drought tolerance:** moderate
- Soil salt tolerances:** good
- Plant spacing:** 36 to 60 inches

## Other

**Roots:** usually not a problem

**Winter interest:** no special winter interest

**Outstanding plant:** not particularly outstanding

**Invasive potential:** not known to be invasive

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

## Use and Management

The rich, grey-green leaves are set off by a profusion of fragrant, loose flower clusters, ranging from white to deep pink, depending upon cultivar, appearing in springtime. A second, less pronounced flower display may be produced in the fall. Flowers are followed months later by somewhat showy, small, purplish-black berries.

Indian Hawthorn does best on well-drained soils and tolerates drought conditions well. Plants will not be as dense or flower well if grown in partial shade. In addition, plants in less than 6 hours sun often lose foliage due to a leaf spot disease. This is a perfect low-maintenance small shrub in the sun. Plant on 3 to 4 foot centers to establish a quick covering, dense planting mass. Be sure that air circulation is good around the plant to prevent leaf spot diseases.

Available cultivars include: 'Ballerina', 1 to 2 feet tall, dark pink flowers; 'Enchantress', dwarf plant that blooms profusely from late winter until early spring; 'Fascination', dense, compact plant with star-shaped springtime flowers, rose-colored with white center; 'Hines Darkleaf' (Bay Breeze) is patented, propagation rights are protected, hardy into zone 8, maroon or green new foliage, dark purple fall color; 'Jack Evans', compact, spreading growth, double pink flowers; 'Snow White', dwarf, spreading growth, white blooms, early spring well into summer; 'Springtime', faster-growing selection with dense, leathery, bronze green foliage and profuse pink flowers from late winter to mid-spring. *Raphiolepis indica rosea* has pink flowers and more compact habit, good for areas with hot sun and poor soil.

Propagation is by seed or cuttings.

Indian Hawthorn is bothered by soil nematodes and scale.

## Pests and Diseases

Leaf spots often infect the foliage causing leaf drop in shady locations.

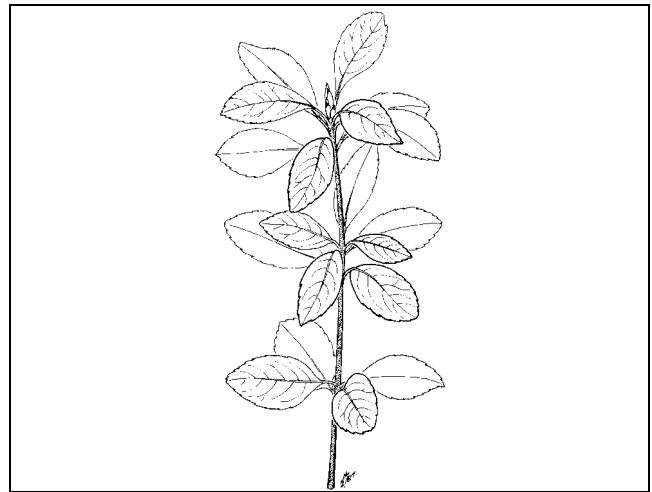


Figure 3. Foliage of Indian Hawthorn