



Podocarpus latifolius Podocarpus¹

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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

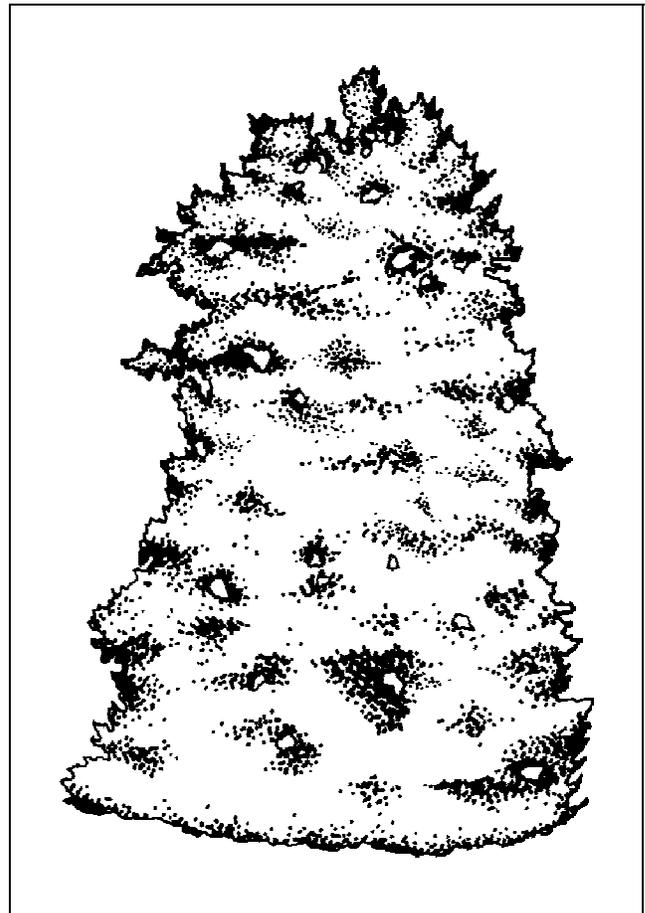


Figure 1. Mature Podocarpus.

Growth rate: slow
Texture: fine

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-494, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

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

Flower

Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: irregular; round

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: green

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

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

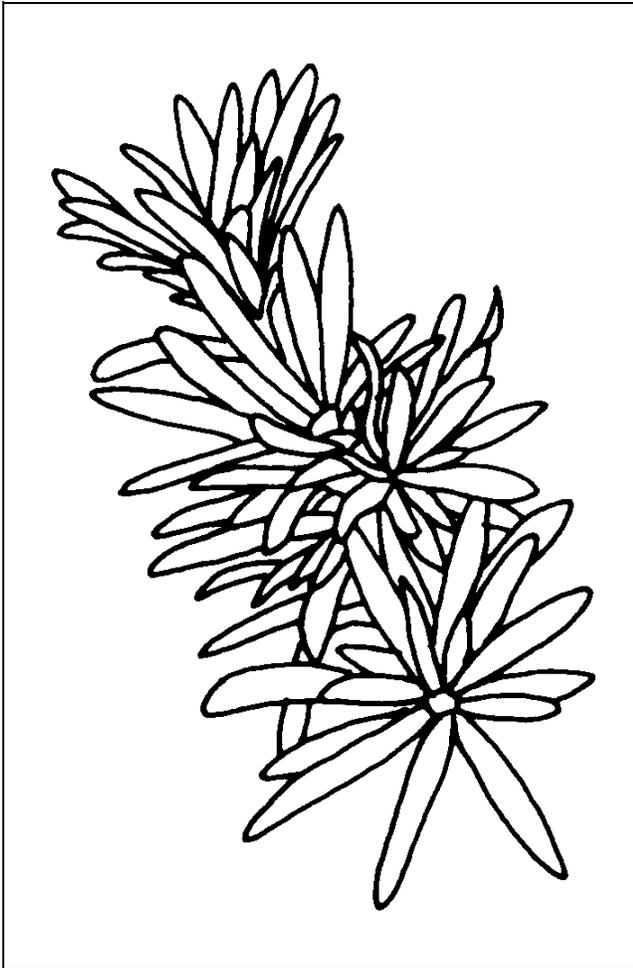


Figure 3. Foliage of Podocarpus.

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.