

# *Tabebuia heterophylla*: Pink Trumpet Tree<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

Pink trumpet tree grows at a moderate rate from a slim pyramid when young to a broad silhouette, 20 to 30 feet tall. The palmately compound, green leaves are evergreen throughout most of its range but may be briefly deciduous as the new leaves emerge. The showy display of pink or white, bell-shaped blooms appears throughout the spring and summer and is followed by the production of long, slender seedpods.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Tabebuia heterophylla*

**Pronunciation:** tab-eh-BOO-yuh het-er-oh-FILL-uh

**Common name(s):** Pink trumpet tree

**Family:** Bignoniaceae

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10A through 11 (Figure 2)

**Origin:** native to Puerto Rico and the West Indies

**UF/IFAS Invasive Assessment Status:** not considered a problem species at this time, may be recommended

**Uses:** specimen; street without sidewalk; deck or patio; parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot island < 100 sq ft; parking lot island 100–200 sq ft; parking lot island > 200 sq ft; tree lawn 4–6 feet wide; tree lawn 3–4 feet wide; tree lawn > 6 ft wide; urban tolerant; highway median



Figure 1. Full Form—*Tabebuia heterophylla*: Pink trumpet tree

## Description

**Height:** 20 to 30 feet

**Spread:** 15 to 25 feet

**Crown uniformity:** irregular

**Crown shape:** oval

1. This document is ENH-774, one of a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date November 1993. Revised March 2007 and December 2018. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for the currently supported version of this publication.
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**Crown density:** open  
**Growth rate:** moderate  
**Texture:** medium



Figure 2. Range

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite  
**Leaf type:** palmately compound; made up of 5 or fewer leaflets  
**Leaf margin:** entire, undulate  
**Leaf shape:** oblong, elliptic (oval)  
**Leaf venation:** pinnate  
**Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen, semi-evergreen  
**Leaf blade length:** 6 to 12 inches; leaflets 2 to 6 inches  
**Leaf color:** medium green on top, lighter green underneath  
**Fall color:** no color change  
**Fall characteristic:** not showy



Figure 3. Leaf—*Tabebuia heterophylla*: Pink trumpet tree

## Flower

**Flower color:** pink, white/cream/gray  
**Flower characteristics:** very showy; trumpet-shaped and emerges in clusters at the ends of branches  
**Flowering:** spring and summer



Figure 4. Flower—*Tabebuia heterophylla*: Pink trumpet tree

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** pod or pod-like, elongated  
**Fruit length:** 3 to 12 inches  
**Fruit covering:** dry or hard  
**Fruit color:** brown  
**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem  
**Fruiting:** shortly after flowering



Figure 5. Fruit—*Tabebuia heterophylla*: Pink trumpet tree

## Trunk and Branches

**Trunk/branches:** branches don't droop; not showy; typically one trunk; no thorns  
**Bark:** silvery gray and smooth, becoming scaly with age  
**Pruning requirement:** needed for strong structure

**Breakage:** susceptible to breakage  
**Current year twig color:** brown  
**Current year twig thickness:** medium  
**Wood specific gravity:** 0.55



Figure 6. Bark—*Tabebuia heterophylla*: Pink trumpet tree  
Credits: Gitta Hasing

## Culture

**Light requirement:** full sun  
**Soil tolerances:** clay; sand; loam; alkaline; acidic; well-drained  
**Drought tolerance:** high  
**Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem  
**Winter interest:** no  
**Outstanding tree:** yes  
**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown  
**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** unknown  
**Pest resistance:** free of serious pests and diseases

## Use and Management

Pink trumpet tree is well suited for use as a street tree or for other areas such as in parking lot islands and buffer strips where temperatures are high and soil space limited. They will create a canopy over a sidewalk when planted on 25 to 30 foot centers if they are properly pruned. Develop high, arching branches several years after planting by removing the lower, drooping branches. This branching habit may take several pruning's to accomplish. Pink trumpet tree can

also be used as a shade tree for a residential property near the patio or deck, or it can be planted to provide shade to the driveway. The tree will provide lasting shade plus the added benefit of a sensational seasonal color show.

Pink trumpet tree should be grown in full sun on almost any well-drained soil, wet or dry. Established trees are moderately salt-tolerant and highly drought-tolerant. This tree is reported to be more tolerant of urban conditions than the yellow trumpet tree.

Propagation is by seed or by vegetative methods. Vegetatively propagated trees would help ensure that trees bloom at the same time. Seed propagated trees flower at different times.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.

## References

Koeser, A. K., Hasing, G., Friedman, M. H., and Irving, R. B. 2015. Trees: North & Central Florida. Gainesville: University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

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