

Botanical Name: Lavatera assurgentiflora

Common Name: Channel Island tree mallow, California tree mallow

Type of Plant: Dicot: Shrub Character evergreen

Habit of Growth:

Overall Shape an erect, wide-spreading plant, with vigorous growth to produce a large, fully rounded shrub which may become treelike with age; bark is fairly smooth, grayish white; branches somewhat brittle

Height 8' - 15' (20') Spread equal or more Growth Rate rapid

Environment:

Exposure outdoors full or partial sun

Soil tolerates most except highly alkaline; prefers well-drained

Hardiness hardy (zones 14-24): prefers warm coastal habitats

Morphology:

Leaves palmate, alternate, maple-like, 3-7 lobed; 2"-4" (6") long, dull green, coarsely toothed

Flowers reddish-lavender, white and purple-striped petals; 2-2 1/2" diameter, 5-petaled, mostly solitary, axillary; April-August, intermittent

Fruit oval capsule, 1/2" across

Propagation: seed, semi-hardwood cuttings

Usage: an excellent fast-growing background shrub or large informal hedge, valued for its flower display and easy care; can be sheared to develop a denser canopy

Landscape Care:

Watering occasional deep soak; very drought-resistant after established; avoid heavy watering

Fertilizing little needed

Pruning can leave alone; selectively head back or infrequent shear to enhance full canopy; can be trained into tree form

Pests/Diseases soil root rot in wet clay soils

Special Conditions

Origin: So. Ca. Islands Family: Malvaceae