

Botanical Name: Lavatera bicolor (Lavatera maritima)

Common Name: Tree mallow

Type of Plant: Dicot: shrub Family Malvaceae

Habit of Growth:

Overall Shape An evergreen shrub with a fairly full structure - with ascending and spreading stems developing a rounded shape which becomes looser and more irregular with age unless pruned

Height 4 - 6 (8ft.) Spread equal or more Growth Rate moderate- rapid

Environment:

Exposure full sun preferred; tolerates partial shade at inland locations

Soil prefers well-drained sites - can tolerate clay soils if not over-watered

Hardiness hardy (zones 8,9, 14 - 24): thrives in warm sunny locations to 2500 ft.

Morphology:

Leaves palmate, alternate, pale green on both surfaces; have 3 - 5 lobes, with serrate margin; are 2 -3" across, with fairly long (2") petioles - provides the maple-like foliage a appearance

Flowers showy, with conspicuous hibiscus-like form; 2 - 3" wide, 5 petals and large pistil; rose-pink with dark rose-purple veining and center; spring-summer

Fruit a small capsule

Propagation: softwood or semi hard-wood cuttings

Usage: a large filler or informal screening shrub, valued for its light green foliage and long display of the showy flowers; best-suited for Mediterranean or sub-tropical theme gardens (cottage - theme OK)

Landscape Care:

Watering tolerates regular - best if given an occasional deep-soak watering (to slow the growth rate)

Fertilizing balanced in spring if plant looks chlorotic

Pruning head back in fall to control size, promote new flowering wood next year

Pests/Diseases relatively free (not as susceptible to white fly as Hibiscus spp.)

Other

Origin: coastal areas in southern France