

Botanical Name: Bauhinia variegata (Bauhinia purpurea)

Common Name: Purple orchid tree

Type of Plant: dicot: tree Character deciduous

Habit of Growth:

Overall Shape an upright to irregularly spreading multitrunked tree with an  
open rounded canopy; older plants tend to have a full canopy which is somewhat  
umbrella-shaped; young plants are often trained into single-trunked trees

Height 15'-30' (40') Spread 2/3-equal Growth Rate rapid

Environment:

Exposure full or partial sun preferred; avoid heavy shade for best flowering

Soil a moist loamy soil is preferred; can tolerate most except highly alkaline

Hardiness some frost (zones 13, 18-23); thrives in warm areas near the coast

Morphology:

Leaves palmate, alternate, conspicuously bi-lobed with 9 - 13 veins spreading  
from the base of blade; 3"-5" wide and as long, light bluish green, leathery

Flowers pinkish lavender to orchid or purple, very showy, with an orchid-like  
shape, fragrant, 2-3" wide; in axillary clusters; mostly late spring - summer

Fruit a pod: large (4-10" long), dark brown, not constricted between the seeds

Propagation: by seed (germinate easily)

Usage: a very conspicuous accent tree, prized for its spectacular flower display  
flower display and attractive foliage; widely used as a lawn or street tree;  
primarily for tropical - subtropical landscape styles; is very messy

Landscape Care:

Watering regular is preferred - can tolerate heavy watering; the plant is some-  
what drought-tolerant after established in mild climate coastal areas

Fertilizing feed with a balanced fertilizer after peak blooming period

Pruning young plants usually require staking and heading high; thin as needed

Pests/Diseases relatively free; check for whitefly and mealybug in shaded sites

Special Conditions can be invasive from seed / the most widely used Bauhinia

Origin: subtropical regions of southern China Family: Fabaceae