



Stewartia monadelph Tall Stewartia¹

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson²

INTRODUCTION

Tall Stewartia grows 20 to 25 feet in height in as many years though it has been known to reach 80 feet, its young pyramidal crown maturing into an open, multi-trunked form with somewhat horizontal branches (Fig. 1). The 1.5 to 2.5-inch-long dark green leaves cast light shade below this deciduous tree, and cling well into the fall after changing to an attractive deep red. In June the small, white, cupped flowers appear, opening over a four-week period but are not particularly striking. The smooth cinnamon-brown bark is outstanding and help to make Tall Stewartia quite striking in the winter landscape.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Stewartia monadelph*

Pronunciation: stoo-AR-tee-uh mawn-uh-DELL-fuh

Common name(s): Tall Stewartia

Family: *Theaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 6B through 8 (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: container or above-ground planter; espalier; large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; sidewalk cutout (tree pit); residential street tree; no proven urban tolerance

Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

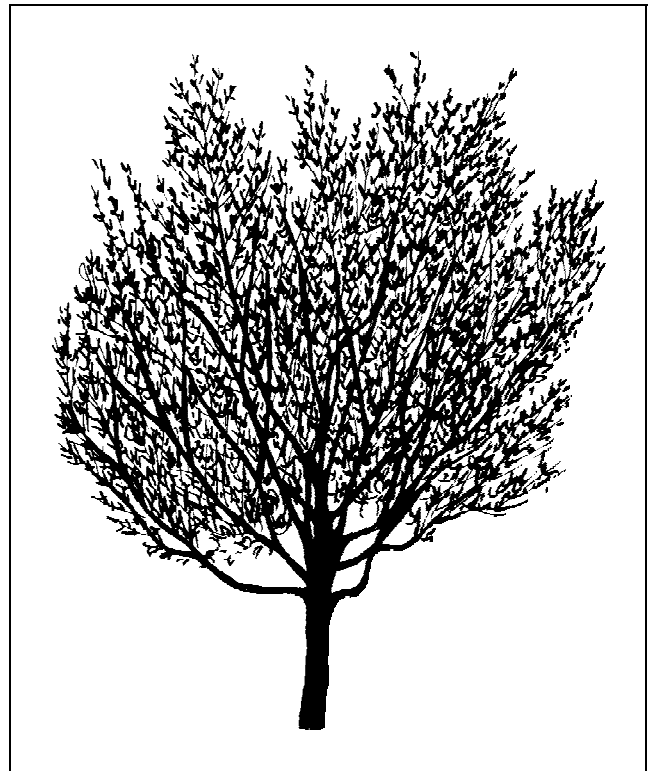


Figure 1. Middle-aged Tall Stewartia.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 20 to 25 feet

Spread: 15 to 25 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

Crown shape: pyramidal; vase shape

Crown density: open

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-602, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
2. Edward F. Gilman, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.

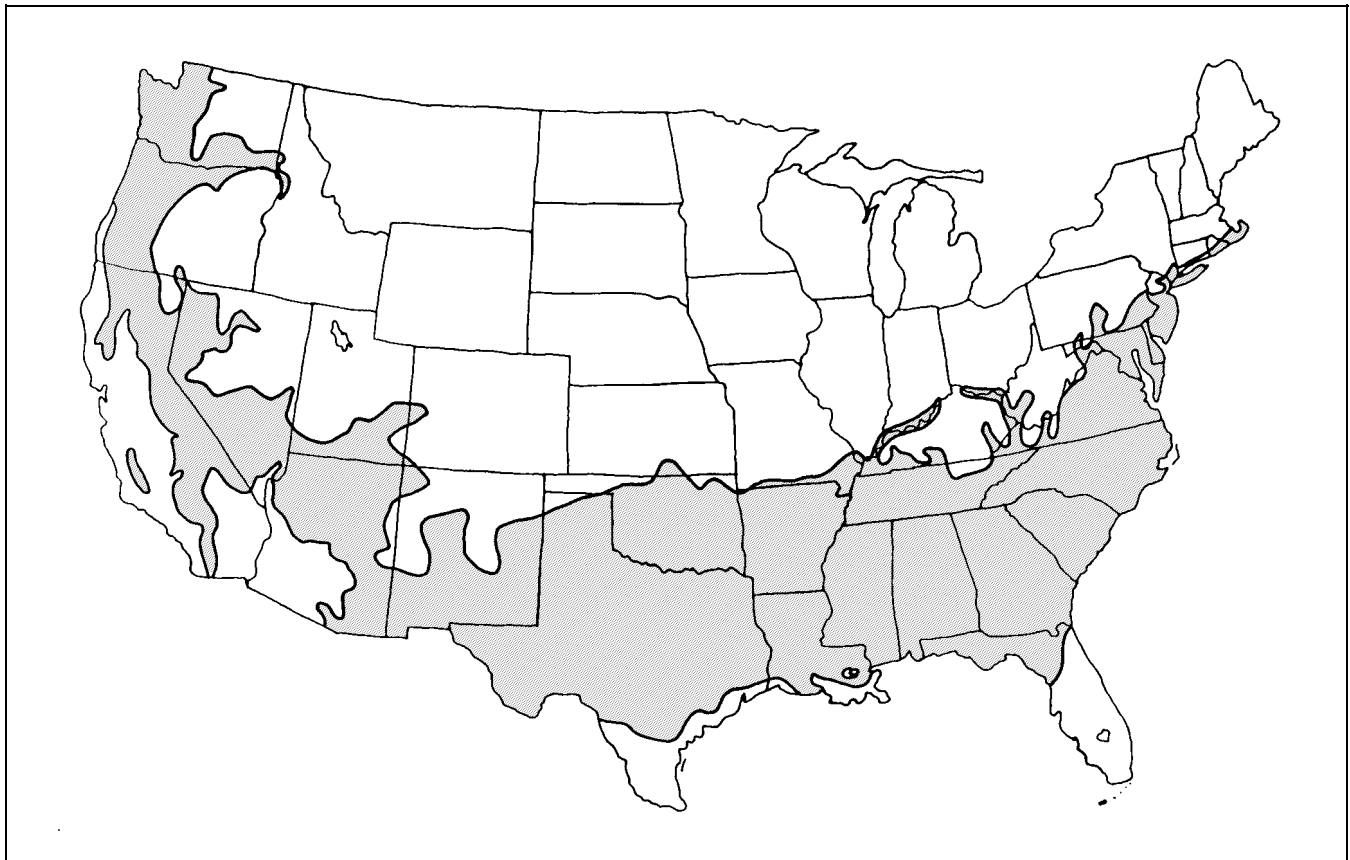


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: serrate

Leaf shape: elliptic (oval); ovate

Leaf venation: banchidodrome; pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches; less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: red

Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: white

Flower characteristics: showy; summer flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval; round

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; grow mostly upright and will not droop; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; very showy trunk; no thorns

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green; gray

Current year twig thickness: thin

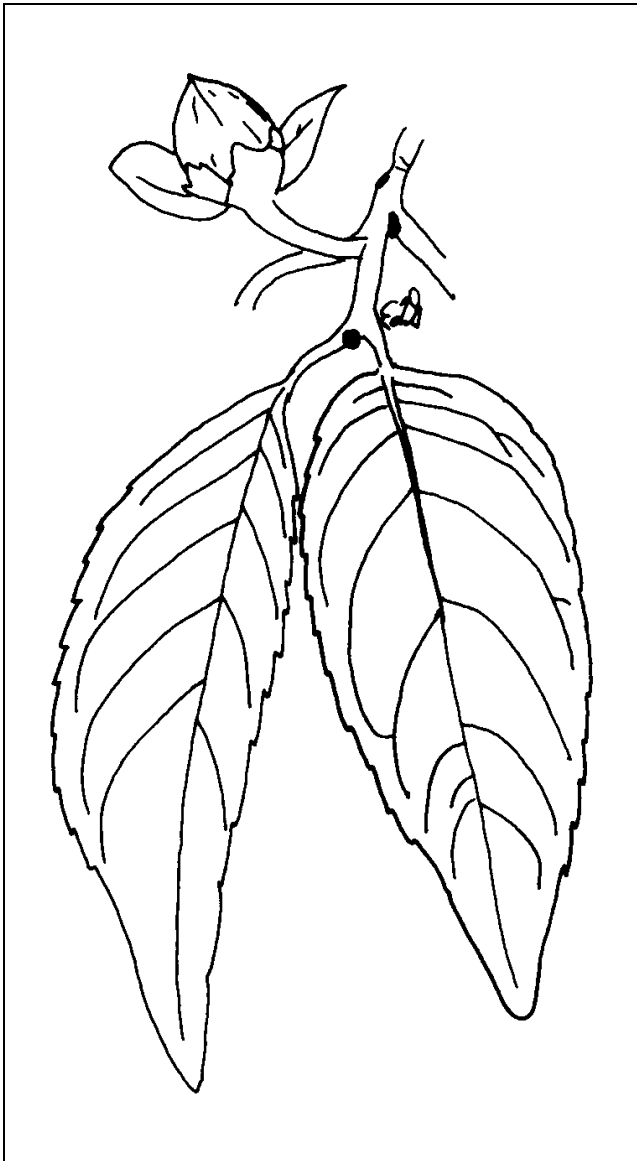


Figure 3. Foliage of Tall Stewartia.

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: high

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: tree has winter interest due to
unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter
trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental
features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the
tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

This tree can be used in much the same way as Japanese Stewartia. It is unsurpassed as a specimen, but can also be included in a shrub border, planted near a patio or deck to show off the wonderful bark, or used as a multi-trunked street tree planted on 20-foot centers. Set it off as a specimen by placing it in a bed of low, evergreen ground cover.

Best when grown in partial shade in USDA hardiness zone 8b, Tall Stewartia can tolerate a full sun position if its roots can be shaded by ground cover, mulch or shrubbery. This may be the best *Stewartia* species for the Deep South. *Stewartia monadelphica* is a native species well-suited for the Deep South. Well-drained, acid to neutral soil is best.

Propagation is by seed or cuttings.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases of major concern, and this tree should be grown and planted more often.