

PEAR HAWTHORN

Crataegus calpodendron

(Ehrh.) Medik.

Plant Symbol = CRCA

Contributed By: USDA NRCS National Plant Data Center



Native Trees of Texas
Texas A&M University

Alternative Name

blackthorn

Uses

Erosion Control: Because it tolerates a wide variety of sites, it can be planted to stabilize banks, for shelterbelts, and from wind and water erosion.

Timber: Although the wood is hard and strong, it has no commercial value except for tool handles and other small items.

Wildlife: It provides excellent cover and nesting sites for many smaller birds. Birds, rodents and other smaller mammals eat the small fruits. White tailed deer browse the young twigs and leaves.

Beautification: Excellent for environmental plantings including small specimen tree and shrub border.

Status

Please consult the Plants Web site and your State Department of Natural Resources for this plant's current status, such as, state noxious status and wetland indicator values.

Description

General: It is a small tree that grows to twenty feet high; with wide-spreading, horizontal, thorny branches. Leaves are broadest below or above the middle, thin, dull yellow-green, shiny, pubescent underneath, some with shallow lobes near tip. Flowers are produced in several flowered clusters with anthers mostly pink. Fruits are attached on slender stalks, elongated, and bright red in color.

Distribution: Pear hawthorn grows from Ontario and Minnesota, south to Georgia and Missouri.

Adaptation

Although *Crataegus calpodendron* will succeed in partial shade and different soil types, it grows best in full sunlight, in well-drained loamy soils. Pear hawthorn will tolerate wet soils becoming drought tolerant once established. It is also wind tolerant, making it a good tree species in shelterbelt planting. It is tolerant of atmospheric pollution and performs well in urban settings.

Establishment

Propagation from Seed: Seeds can propagate Pear hawthorn. Successful propagation using seeds requires acid scarification followed by warm stratification and prechilling. Seeds, whose numbers per lb. varies with species, are acid scarified for thirty minutes, prechilled for three months, then planted early in the fall, in drill rows eight to twelve inches apart and covered with 1/4 inch of soil. Seedlings must not be kept in the nursery longer than a year.

Containerized trees should be planted when they are no more than eight feet tall, in the fall or spring. Balled and burlapped trees should be planted in early spring.

Management

Pruning should be done in the winter or early spring in order to maintain a clear shoot leader on young trees and/or remove the weakest branches to allow more light to pass through. Suckers or stems arising from the roots should be removed when they become noticeable.

Pest and Potential Problems

Although pests and diseases seldom affect it, it is susceptible to fireblight, cedar-hawthorn rust, cedar-quince rust, leaf blight, fruit rot, and leaf spot.

Cultivars, Improved and Selected Materials (and area of origin)

Consult your local nurseries to choose the right cultivar for your specific landscape. Contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service) office for more information. Look in the phone book under "United States Government." The Natural Resources Conservation Service will be listed under the subheading "Department of Agriculture."

References

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Prepared By

Alfredo B. Lorenzo
Formerly, Southern University and A&M College
College of Agricultural, Family and Consumer
Sciences, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Species Coordinator

Lincoln M. Moore
USDA, NRCS, National Plant Data Center, Baton
Rouge, Louisiana

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