

***Randia aculeata* White Indigoberry¹**

Edward F. Gilman²

Introduction

Randia aculeata has been rated by some as one of the best shrubs for the south Florida area, but it is little known (Fig. 1). This 6- to 10-foot-tall, evergreen shrub has small, spiny, leathery leaves that are clustered toward the tips of the branches. These leaves and the stiff branching habit of this plant give it a sort of geometric look. The small, white, axillary flowers produced by this plant are fragrant and occur throughout the year. The white Indigoberry also has showy white fruits that give this plant a certain appeal. In the landscape this plant could be commonly used as a specimen.

General Information

Scientific name: *Randia aculeata*

Pronunciation: RAN-dee-uh ah-kew-lee-AY-tuh

Common name(s): white indigoberry

Family: *Rubiaceae*

Plant type: shrub

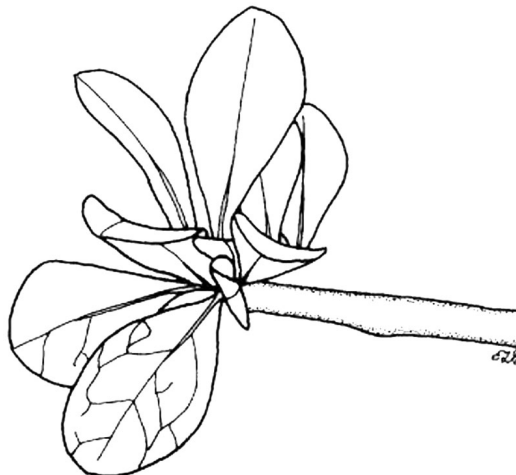


Figure 1. White indigoberry

USDA hardiness zones: 10 through 11 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: specimen; foundation; border

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Description

Height: 6 to 10 feet

Spread: 5 to 8 feet

Plant habit: round

Plant density: open

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: orbiculate

Leaf venation: pinnate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: white

Flower characteristic: pleasant fragrance;
year-round flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit cover: fleshy

Fruit color: white

Fruit characteristic: attracts birds

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: thorns present; not particularly showy

Current year stem/twig color: green

Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun

Soil tolerances: acidic; alkaline; sand; loam; clay

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerances: moderate

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

The white indigoberry will flourish on well-drained sandy or rocky soils. It is quite drought tolerant and prefers to be planted in full sun. Its habit is open in the shade. This plant has a very high salt spray tolerance and is a great shrub for coastal landscapes.

Pests and Diseases

No major problems are associated with this plant.