FPS536



Savia bahamensis Maidenbush¹

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Introduction

Maidenbush is a small-leaved, compact, native shrub with some resemblance to cocoplum (Fig. 1). This 6- to 10-foot-tall euphorb has pretty, oval green leaves that are folded toward each other along the long stems. When the new growth of this plant emerges it is a bright red color. The fruits and flowers of the maidenbush are not the "stars of the show" but are small and inconspicuous; the foliage is the real attraction. This shrub makes a great specimen plant and is suitable for coastal landscapes.

General Information

Scientific name: Savia bahamensis

Pronunciation: SAY-vee-uh bah-hah-MEN-sis

Common name(s): maidenbush

Family: Euphorbiaceae

Plant type: shrub

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

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

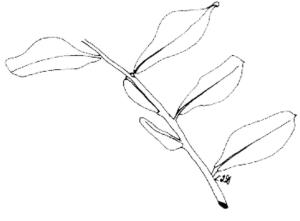


Figure 1. Maidenbush

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: hedge; specimen; screen

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out

of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 6 to 10 feet

Spread: 6 to 10 feet

Plant habit: round

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Plant density: moderate Flower

Growth rate: slow Flower color: green

Texture: medium Flower characteristic: spring flowering

Foliage

Fruit

Leaf arrangement: alternate Fruit shape: unknown

Leaf type: simple Fruit length: less than .5 inch

Leaf margin: entire Fruit cover: dry or hard

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see **Fruit characteristic:** inconspicuous and not showy

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen Trunk and Branches

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or

clumping stems; not particularly showy **Leaf color:** green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun

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

clay

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

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: no serious pests are normally seen

on the plant

Use and Management

Maidenbush will thrive on dry sandy soils in full or partial sun. Maidenbush is a drought-tolerant plant, but it may be damaged by cold weather in areas north of Vero Beach. Native soil is fairly well drained in the coastal upland plant communities. Soil pH in its native habitat is slightly alkaline or neutral.

Pests and Diseases

There are no major problems growing maidenbush.