

Fiddlewood

Citharexylum spinosum syn. *quadrangulare* is an evergreen, medium-sized tree, which grows to a height of 15 metres and is beautiful because of its long tassels of richly scented, white flowers. It has, no spines, but smooth, quadrangular twigs. The bark is light brown, and becomes fissured with maturity. Its common name is Fiddlewood and it is a native of the West Indies, where it generally grows in wet habitats below 500 metres elevation in agricultural, coastland and urban areas. Leaves are ovate and have orange petioles. They turn an orange-brown colour during the dry season, and without regular irrigation the tree can be deciduous. Flowers borne in racemes cover the tree from spring to autumn. The fruits are red to black drupes. Hardy to -6°C, *C. spinosum* requires full sun to partial shade and grows in most soils, preferring neutral to mildly alkaline, well-drained soils. Fiddlewood trees should not be overwatered. Propagation is best from woody stem cuttings or seeds. Easy to grow, and with its dark-green, shiny and ornamental foliage, it makes a good tree for landscape use. It does, however, have major disadvantages in that all parts of the plant are poisonous and it may become an invasive, noxious weed. *C. spinosum* is a tree that is now being planted in Arriyadh for its aesthetic appeal. Its roots are very aggressive. Regular pruning is necessary to shape trees. If removal of the tree is desired, it is necessary that the whole root mass also be removed, since *C. spinosum* will grow back quickly from a cut down trunk.



GENERAL

Origin	: sub-tropical, tropical
Humidity	: semi-humid, very humid, extremely humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out, cuttings
Maintenance	: high

CONDITIONS

Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (2000 ppm)
Hardiness	: -6°C

SHAPE

Type	: tree
Height	: 15 m
Spread	: 12 m
Foliage	: semi-evergreen, evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: white
Size	: 40 cm
Period	: April - September
Smell	: scented

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: drupe(fleshy/ juicy)
Fruit size	: 1 cm
Toxicity	: poisonous