

Vitex trifolia

(Variegated Vitex, Trifoliate Chastetree)

This fast growing large upright shrub large shrub or small tree is popular for its variegated foliage and pretty blue flowers . The aromatic trifoliate leaves of the cultivar 'Purpurea' emerge purple and mature to grayish green with fuzzy pale lavender undersides Crushed foliage releases a peppery scent. The tiny flowers are lavender-purple produced most abundantly in midsummer, but sporadically whenever temperatures are warm . The fragrant blooms attract butterflies and are an excellent nectar source for honeybees. Small black berries are usually produced in abundance. It needs full sun for best form and heaviest flowering. Moist well-drained soil is ideal, but this species tolerates moderate drought and sandy soils. It also withstands salt spray. This plant creates a nice, dense shrub if it is properly pruned. The plant creates a wonderful hedge, screen, and border. It is commonly planted in mass but also makes a great specimen plant. Rapidly growing out of bounds. Vitex is high maintenance in terms of pruning and should be fertilized twice a year.



Plant Image

Landscape Information

French Name: viex

Pronunciation: VYE-tecks try-FOLE-lee-uh

Plant Type: Shrub

Origin: southeastern Asia and Australia

Heat Zones: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

Hardiness Zones: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

Uses: Screen, Hedge, Specimen, Mass Planting, Container, Wildlife

Size/Shape

Growth Rate: Fast

Tree Shape: Round

Canopy Symmetry: Symmetrical

Canopy Density: Dense

Canopy Texture: Fine

Height at Maturity: 3 to 5 m

Spread at Maturity: 1.5 to 3 meters

Time to Ultimate Height: 5 to 10 Years

Notes

Oils from the leaves of *V. trifolia* show considerable mosquito repellent activity.

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Flower Image

Botanical Description

Foliage

Leaf Arrangement: Opposite

Leaf Venation: Pinnate

Leaf Persistence: Evergreen

Leaf Type: Palmately Compound

Leaf Blade: Less than 5

Leaf Margins: Entire

Leaf Textures: Smooth

Leaf Scent: Pleasant

Color(growing season): Green, Red, Variegated

Color(changing season): Green

Flower

Flower Showiness: True

Flower Size Range: 1.5 - 3

Flower Type: Raceme

Flower Sexuality: Monoecious (Bisexual)

Flower Scent: Pleasant

Flower Color: Purple, Blue

Seasons: Spring, Summer

Trunk

Trunk Susceptibility to Breakage: Suspected to breakage

Number of Trunks: Multi-Trunked

Trunk Esthetic Values: Smooth

Fruit

Fruit Showiness: False

Fruit Size Range: 0 - 1.5

Seasons: Spring, Summer

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Leaf Image

© Photo by Monika Fabian

Horticulture Management

Tolerance

Frost Tolerant: No

Heat Tolerant: No

Drought Tolerant: Yes

Salt Tolerance: Moderate

Requirements

Soil Requirements: Clay, Loam, Sand

Soil Ph Requirements: Acidic, Neutral, Alkaline

Water Requirements: Moderate, Low

Light Requirements: Full

Management

Toxity: No

Invasive Potential: No

Susceptibility to Pests and Diseases: No

Pruning Requirement: Needed, to develop a strong structure

Fruit/ Leaves/ Flowers litter: No

Surface Rooting: No

Life Span: Less than 25

Edible Parts:

Pests: Mites

Plant Propagations: Cutting

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