

DESERT WILLOW ‘BUBBA’

Chilopsis linearis ‘Bubba’



Characteristics

- Type: Tree
- Zone: 6 to 10
- Height: 25-30 feet
- Spread: 25-30 feet
- Bloom Time: Spring through Summer
- Bloom Description: Dark Burgundy and Pink
- Sun: Full sun
- Water: Low to Moderate
- Maintenance: Low
- Flower: Showy, Fragrant
- Fruit: Showy
- Tolerate: Drought, Dry Soil
- Texas Native

Culture

Chilopsis linearis ‘Bubba’ is a vigorous, fast-growing upright selection of desert willow that originated in Texas. Compared to other selections it has a strong vertical form and is less shrubby. It also has glossy, darker green, more lush foliage than other desert willows. It has the capacity to easily grow up to 30 feet tall in the landscape. Starting in late spring and through the summer ‘Bubba’ produces masses of large, fragrant, two-tone burgundy and pink flowers. Like other desert willows ‘Bubba’ is a great choice for full sun, low maintenance, water efficient landscapes. Although it is not seedless, it produces fewer pods than most selections. Each pod containing many winged seeds.

Noteworthy Characteristics

Chilopsis linearis, commonly known as desert willow, is a large shrub or small multi-trunked tree with a loose open crown. It typically grows to 15-25’ tall with a spread to 10-15’ wide, though some varieties, like ‘Bubba’, grow taller. It is native to gravelly and rocky soils in the Southwestern U.S. and northern Mexico where it is usually found growing in desert grasslands, sandy washes or springs. While the narrow, long leaf shape is indeed willow-like, *Chilopsis linearis* is in fact related to Catalpa trees, Yellow Bells (*Tecoma stans*), and Trumpet Vine (*Campsis radicans*). While oversized in comparison to other members of its family, ‘Bubba’ remains reasonably sized for compact growing spaces as an ornamental accent. ‘Bubba’ is an eye-catching deciduous tree. Shapely, slender branches can be trained to a variety of silhouettes as a single or multi-trunk tree, or rounded out as a large shrub. Glossy, deep green leaf color creates a tropical-looking effect in combination with bright, orchid-like flowers.

Problems

No serious insect or disease problems.

Garden Uses

Excellent as specimen or in small groups in residential landscapes. Particularly effective near decks or patios. Desert gardens. Tall hedge. Screen. Roadsides and median strips. ‘Bubba’ is well adapted to desert washes and requires minimal water to put on its colorful show during hot summer months. It is sun-loving and drought-tolerant, making it a great fit for lawn and sidewalk strips and other exposed urban locations. Little care is required to enjoy the long season of beauty. Over-watering or applying excessive fertilizer will cause harm, reducing the number of blooms and weakening this naturally hardy plant.