

Cotinus coggygia - Smokebush (*Anacardiaceae*)

Cotinus coggygia is a large shrub or small tree that has ornamental flower parts (pedicels) above the foliage, resembling a cloud of smoke; there are also purple leaf forms of this plant that are quite popular.

FEATURES

Form

- large shrub or small tree
- to 12' tall x 12' wide
- spreading, rounded to irregular
- medium growth rate (12-18" per year)



Culture

- full sun to partial shade
- Smokebush grows best in a sunny location and a well-drained loam however, it is very useful in dry, rocky soil.
- adaptable to various soils and pHs
- Diseases: The most serious disease is Verticillium wilt. Smokebush is very susceptible, and entire branches wilt and die. Prune out infected branches, and fertilize and water the plant during dry weather.
- Insect pests: oblique-banded leaf roller mines and rolls the leaves, usually in June. The insect rarely occurs in sufficient numbers to warrant control. When it does occur, they can be picked off by hand.
- abundantly available, especially foliage variants

Foliage

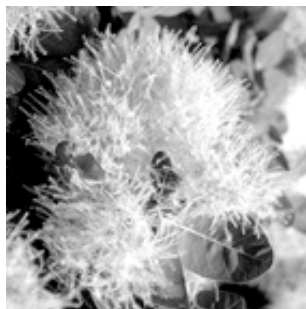


-dark green to blue-green or purple (depending on cultivar)

- oval to obovate leaf blade with prominent veins and entire margin
- alternate arrangement, but becoming clustered at stem apex
- autumn color - yellow, red, orange, purple, or yellowish green; inconsistent, but usually good

Flowers

- inconspicuous
- the ornamental effect is derived from the pedicels, which are large, much-branched, and hairy, either green or purple-pink, and resembling a cloud of smoke hovering above



the foliage; June-Sept.

Fruits

- inconspicuous

Twigs

- smooth, somewhat flattened at apex; mature stems heavily lenticled, brown-purple, with small dark buds

Trunk

- slightly furrowed
- light brown

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Function

- rows, borders, specimen shrub, groups, mass plantings

Texture

- bold in foliage and when bare

Assets

- foliage color variants
- showy pedicels in summer

Liabilities

- some stem dieback due to various diseases

Habitat

- Zones 4 to 8
- Native to Southern Europe and Central Asia

SELECTIONS

Alternates

- shrubs with summer flowering effect; shrubs with purple or red-purple summer foliage; shrubs with bold textured branching

Cultivars – Variants – Related species

- C. coggygia* 'Royal Purple' - foliage emerging red-maroon and deepening to purple throughout the summer; red-purple autumn color
- C. coggygia* 'Velvet Cloak' - similar to above, with the foliage color fading somewhat during the summer
- C. coggygia* 'Nordine' - Originated at the Morton Arboretum in Chicago. Produces large, red plumes in mid-summer. Hardest of the purple-leaved cultivars but stems may die to the ground in severe winters.
- C. coggygia* 'Purpureus' - The white flowers contrast with the purple leaves.
- C. coggygia* 'Daydream' - One of the best green-leaved selections, with dense blooms that are very full and "creamy"-looking. The habit is more compact, to 10' tall and wide.