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Tabebuia aurea

Silver Trumpet Tree, Tree-of-Gold,
Yellow Pouí, Yellow Tab

Bignoniaceae

Flower Display: A+



Fort Myers, Florida

Mid March

This is one of the most spectacular of flowering trees, especially when grouped. Flowering is brief, intense and is usually started and completed by all trees in close unison. *T. aurea* begins to bloom when the tree commences to lose its leaves. Trees flower with varying degrees of leaf retention. The most desirable flowering with no leaves. *T. aurea* comes in two distinct leaf colors: green and silvery-gray. Silvery-gray leaves are the preferred color, making the 'silver trumpet tree' a very desirable variety. Some specialists consider them to be two species. The bark of *T. aurea* becomes corky with age, and the trunk and canopy are frequently asymmetrical. This species is known for being shallow rooted and topples easily if not staked at planting.



Leaves: Palmate, opposite, to 11 inches long and 4 inches wide with 5-7 oblong-elliptic to oblong-lanceolate leaflets

Flowers: Funnelform, flaring mouth, bright yellow to 3 ½ inches long and 1 inch wide arranged on terminal panicles

Fruits: Capsules, oblong, narrow at each extreme, glossy, gray-brown, somewhat woody, to 6 inches long



Fort Myers, Florida

Late March

Tabebuia aurea

Incorrect: *T. argentea*, *T. caraiba*,
Tecoma argentea

Zone: 10a—12b, 28°F

Flowering Month(s): March—April

Flowering Days: 16

Leaf Persistence: Deciduous

Messiness: Low

Salt Tolerance: High

Drought Tolerance: High

Growth Rate: Medium

Nutritional Requirements: Medium

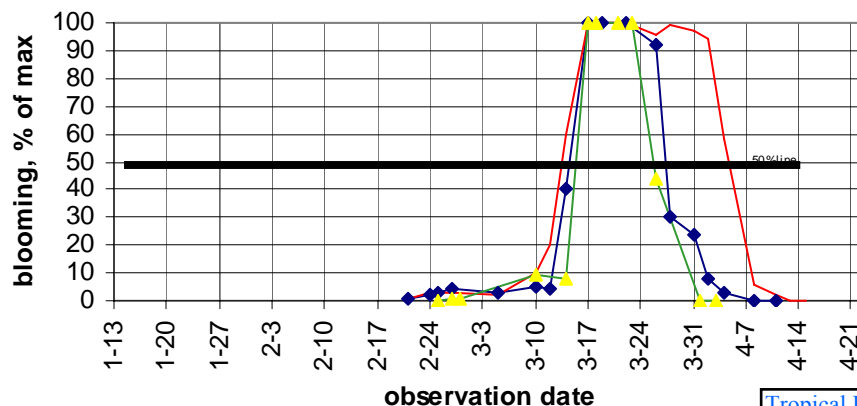
Typical Dimension: 25' x 20'

Uses: Park, Patio, Specimen, Streetscape

Cont. from other side

However, older well-established trees commonly remain standing, even after hurricane force winds. A few trees will begin flowering in late February, but the best performance comes in March or April. In summer, there is a second flower display on some trees. The second flowering does not match the intensity of the March bloom and there is no leaf loss. *T. aurea* grows well in a wide variety of soils and requires little maintenance. Newly planted trees may shed all their leaves in response to transplant shock.

tabebuia aurea



The flowering days of three *T. aurea* trees

[Tropical Flowering Trees List](#)
Questions/Comments:
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The Most Popular *Tabebuia* Tree in Florida

Tabebuia caraiba syns. *T. aurea*, *T. argenta*

Tabebuia caraiba is the *Tabebuia* tree most often grown in the Sunshine State. Its common names include: Silver *Tabebuia*, Silver Trumpet Tree and Tree of Gold because of the silver cast of its mature bark and its stunning yellow blossoms.

The Tree of Gold works hardest to earn this title in the spring. This is when it is at its most striking. The butter yellow *Petunia*-shaped flowers congregate in clusters at the branch tips. There won't be many leaves on the deciduous *Tabebuia* at this time.



The effect is startling at a time when not much else is in bloom. This show will only last a few weeks. Then the tree will clothe itself in oblong, leathery, loden leaves.



Not willing to be forgotten, the golden blossoms will reappear amidst the foliage periodically throughout the growing season.

Another attractive feature of this *Tabebuia* species is its interesting branching structure. This is most easily seen when looking up into the canopy while standing directly beneath the tree or when the tree is nude.



The bark of mature specimens becomes fissured and resembles cork.

Growing *Tabebuia* spp



Tabebuia aurea growing on Grand Bahama Island.

This is one of the best yellow flowering trees to plant in central or south Florida landscapes. It grows with minimal care on nearly any type of soil as few pests bother it and the tree adapts quickly to drought or deluge.

It suffers, occasionally, from [rust](#).

The Silver Trumpet Tree may be expected to grow to a height of 20 feet. It is somewhat salt tolerant but should not be planted too close to the surf.

T. aurea makes a lovely shade tree where it is hardy. It gives a superior performance to most other subtropical trees planted in central Florida as it is more cold tolerant than the majority of these.

Of course, it thrives in steamy climates like those found in south Florida and the Caribbean.

Three Yellow *Tabebuia* Trees of South and Central Florida

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Late winter and spring is the blooming season for an array of *Tabebuia* species. These flowering trees are native to Bahamas, the Caribbean, Central and South America. Most *Tabebuia* species can be successfully grown in South Florida. North of Tampa, cold weather limits the range of most trees in this genus. Featured here are three species of yellow flowering *Tabebuia*s. *Tabebuia aurea* is common to South Florida. *T. ochracea* and *T. umbellata* are more frequently seen between Sarasota and Orlando. The latter two species will also grow well under South Florida conditions.

***Tabebuia aurea*, Silver Trumpet Tree**

Syn: *T. argentea*, *T. caraiba*



Lee County, Mid-March



Bark corksy, tan-white, furrowed with age.



T. aurea in full bloom

Leaves: Palmate, opposite, to 11 in. with 5-9 oblong to obovate leaflets to 6 in. long, gray-green.

Flowers: Funnelorm, flaring mouth, bright yellow to 3.5 in. x 1 in.

Fruit: Follicle, oblong, narrowing at both ends, glossy, gray-brown, somewhat woody, to 6 in. long.

Additional Remarks: Naturally asymmetrical growth habit, semideciduous just before flowering.

***Tabebuia ochracea*, Golden Trumpet Tree**

Syn: *T. chrysatricha*



Highland County, early March



Inflorescence with one plane symmetry



Hairy new pods begin appearing while tree is still in full bloom.

Leaves: Palmate, opposite, 3-5 obovate-elliptic leaflets, 4-5 in. long. Densely pubescent on underside.

Flowers: Funnelform, bright yellow with reddish penciling in throat, to 3.5 in. long. On terminal inflorescence with one plane symmetry.

Fruit: Follicle, linear, cylindric, narrowing at base, golden tan, densely pubescent, to 16 in. x 0.75 in.

Additional Notes: Open growth habit, 15-30 ft., semideciduous, flowers appear on bare branches.

***Tabebuia umbellata*, Yellow Trumpet Tree**



Lee County, early March

Syn: *T. eximia*, *Tecoma umbellata*



Orange County, late March



Palmate leaf



T. umbellata in full bloom

Leaves: Palmate, opposite, 5-7 narrowly obovate to oblong-elliptic pubescent leaflets.

Flowers: Funnelform, bright yellow with reddish penciling in throat.

Fruit: Follicle, linear-cylindric, tapering at both ends, smooth, to 22 in. long and 0.50 inch wide.

Additional Notes: Open growth habit, 15-25 ft., fairly common tree in the Orlando area, deciduous and flowers before new leaves appear. Long, slender, hanging, smooth follicles makes easy identification.

Table 1. Blooming periods and Intense Blooming Days (IBD) of *Tabebuia* species in Florida.

Blooming Period	IBD	Species
January-March	21	<i>T. impetiginosa</i>
February-March	21	<i>T. ochracea</i>
February-March	20	<i>T. heptaphylla</i>
February-April	Not known	<i>T. chrysotricha/ochracea</i> complex
March-April with sporadic flowering throughout the year	17	<i>T. heterophylla</i>
March-April	16	<i>T. aurea</i>
March-April	12	<i>T. umbellata</i>
March-May	Not known	<i>T. rosea</i>
March-June	16	<i>T. bahamensis</i>

Related Links[Flowering Trees Fact Sheets](#)[Tabebuia heterophylla](#)[Tabebuia ochracea](#)[Tabebuia impetiginosa](#)[YouTube of Bombax ceiba](#)[Weather Effects on Flowering Trees](#)[Florida Native Plants Fact Sheets](#)

This fact sheet was reviewed by Peggy Cruz, Lee County Extension Service.; Phyllis Faust, Lee County Master Gardener.

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