

LEAFLET

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ROOTED IN KNOWLEDGE

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Tipuana Tipu-what?

Welcome to the third issue of “The *Leaflet*”...

... Once again researched for you by Peter Green, Four Seasons Tree Care's Tree Health Manager. Our goal is for each *Leaflet* to be concise, yet highly informative, as we explore the various tree issues you may encounter here in San Diego. This will be a brief look at the beautiful *Tipuana tipu*, or Tipu Tree.

The Tree: *Tipuana tipu* (pronounced "TIP-poo-ah-nuh TEE-poo")

The Problem: Too messy. Grows too fast. Invasive roots. Psyllid infestations.

The Treatment: Plant in correct place. Learn to live with the mess.

The City of San Diego ‘Street Tree Selection Guide’ describes the Tipu Tree as a large-canopied, deciduous flowering tree with a height and spread of over 40 feet. It recommends a 7 to 10 foot parkway area with a minimum cutout of 40 square feet.

As a tree service company, we get year-round complaints about these trees. In early spring they look terrible before the flowers and leaves appear. In early summer they make a huge mess when the abundant flowers fall off. In mid-summer, the Psyllids drop copious amounts of sticky honeydew. By fall they have grown 12 foot long whip-like branches that hang in the street and sidewalks. Mid-winter they drop most of their leaves. And finally, by the end of winter, people are complaining about hardscape damage from invasive roots.



Personally, I think these are very attractive large trees. They have a nice large deep green canopy, wonderful flowers, and they grow vigorously in our San Diego climate. As an added bonus, they don't appear to be negatively affected by our city-mandated lower water use. As a company, we like these trees because they generate a healthy amount of business for us. We have to clearance prune them once a year. We apply insecticides and growth regulators to keep residents' complaints to a low murmur. Then, after a few years we remove them because they were planted in areas too small to support their size.

Is the Tipu a good tree to plant?

Yes! Fast growing, fairly tough tree with great shade and pretty flowers. Or, No! Fast growing, messy tree with problematic roots. Either way, have realistic expectations for these trees.

Thanks for reading! Please call us with any questions about how to best handle your tree health care needs.

~ Peter Green, Plant Health Care Manager