



## Expanding Tree Diversity in Hawai'i's Landscapes: Naio, Bastard sandalwood, *Myoporum sandwicense*

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**N**ative to the Hawaiian islands, naio has variable growth forms, including a prostrate shrub, a small tree up to 30 ft. tall, and in upland areas a medium tree up to 50 ft. tall; thus it can fit multiple landscape needs. Its diameter varies widely, reaching 12 feet or more. This relatively fast-growing evergreen species has small white, fragrant flowers that bloom sporadically throughout the year. It thrives in dry, well-drained soils and full sunlight, which makes it ideal for xeriscaping.

### Recommended Use in Landscapes

- Dry areas of all Hawaiian islands
- Any elevation with xeric conditions
- Residential areas as windbreaks, hedges, and screens

### Distribution

- Native to all Hawaiian Islands
- Elevation: <150–5,000 feet
- Precipitation: 0–>100 in.
- Naturally occurs in a wide range of habitats

### Propagation Techniques

- 3- to 5-inch semi-hardwood cuttings easily root; use 0.05% IBA rooting hormone.
- To propagate from seed, remove fruit pulp and soak in hot water for up to 2 days.
- Fertilize young trees every 6 months with a balanced slow-release fertilizer.
- Foliar feed monthly with a water-soluble fertilizer (fish emulsion or kelp) diluted to  $\frac{1}{3}$  of recommended dose.
- Needs good drainage
- Let soil dry out between watering.



### Cultural Requirements and Tolerance

- Full sun, arid conditions
- Grows well in a wide range of well-drained soils
- Tolerates wind, drought, and salt spray
- Pruning is required to develop and maintain tree form.

### Flower and Fruit Characteristics

- Small, white to purplish-pink flowers arise in clusters from the leaf axil
- Blooms year round
- Fragrant, with a sweet smell like honey
- Small, fleshy green fruits that vary in color

### Leaf Characteristics

- Medium to dark green
- Relatively thick
- Evergreen
- Elliptic
- Glossy

### Advantages for Use in Landscapes

- Easily pruned and maintains desired shape
- Drought tolerant
- Low maintenance
- Various growth forms
- No messy fruits
- Fragrant flowers and wood
- Long-lived
- Can be used as alternative to oleander (poisonous)

### Disadvantages for Use in Landscapes

- Does not tolerate poor drainage
- Susceptible to ants, aphids, mealybugs, scale, and spider mites
- Susceptible to black sooty mold growth
- Host plant of naio thrips, a non-native pest found on the island of Hawai'i, which causes damage to leaves and new growth

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