



## Expanding Tree Diversity in Hawai'i's Landscapes: 'A'ali'i, Kumakani; *Dodonaea viscosa*

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This small tree, indigenous to the Hawaiian Islands, can grow up to 25 feet tall, with a spread of 5–15 feet. 'A'ali'i is useful in a variety of landscape applications as it can withstand drought, high winds, and salty conditions. The female tree's papery fruits come in a variety of colors. 'A'ali'i thrives in dry, well-drained soils and full sunlight, which makes it ideal for xeriscaping. Many leaf forms and growth habits exist, and pruning and training are necessary to develop a tree.

### Recommended Use in Landscapes

- Xeriscapes
- Windbreaks
- Screen
- Specimen tree
- Sand binder
- Hedge plant

### Distribution

- Wide distribution in the tropics

### Propagation Techniques

- To propagate from seed, remove fruit pulp and immerse seeds in near-boiling water. Let water cool and continue to soak seeds in it for up to 2 days before planting.

### Cultural Requirements and Tolerance

- Thrives in a large range of conditions
- Needs well-drained soil
- Very drought, wind, and salt tolerant



- Pruning required to maintain tree form
- Will be more tree-like if given shade and moisture

### Flower and Fruit Characteristics

- Plants bear either male or female flowers, white and inconspicuous. Some bisexual forms exist.
- Papery winged fruits vary in size ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch to 2 inches) and color: white, green, red, chartreuse, and purplish

### Leaf Characteristics

- Simple, 1–4 inches long
- Glossy
- Variable in shape and color; mostly elliptic

### Advantages for Use in Landscapes

- Easily propagated
- Suitable for problematic areas in the landscape
- Suitable for xeriscapes
- Female trees used in lei making (male does not fruit)

### Disadvantages for Use in Landscapes

- Susceptible to mealybugs, scales, thrips, and aphids
- High variation in phenotypes among seedlings
- Dying brown fruits can be unsightly
- Does not tolerate poor drainage

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