

species are evergreen trees or shrubs with alternately arranged compound leaves, each consisting of four to eight or rarely 12 leaflets which are three to eight inches long. The flowers are not showy, being greenish-white and about one-half inch broad occurring in branching clusters that arise from buds at the bases of the leaves.

Unlike the flowers, the fruits are not easily overlooked. Each one to two inch fruit (technically a capsule because it splits open when mature) is composed of two inflated lobes and varies in color from orange to red, depending on exposure to sunlight. At maturity, these fruits split open to expose in each chamber one or two shiny, jet-black seeds about the size of a small marble. The fruits ripen over the fall and persist from winter through early summer.

Harpullia arborea, growing to 35 feet tall or more, is native from India through Malaya to the Philippines, Australia and Solomon Islands. In the Philippines, it is found in thickets and secondary forests at low and medium elevations and used frequently as a shade tree. The bark is used as fish poison. A watery exudate of the bark and sometimes of the fruit is used for laundering and for hair washing.

Some of the first, if not the first, seeds of *Harpullia arborea* were brought to California in the 1920s or '30s through the efforts of Hugh Evans of the Evans and Reeve nursery. One of the first established trees is thought to have been grown in the Miller garden above Glendora.

The Arboretum's earliest accession of *Harpullia arborea* was seed obtained in February 1954 from Mrs. Lewis Miller from her tree in Glendora. A second accession in July 1954 brought in by Dr. R. Siebert, then Director of the Arboretum, came from the Montgomery estate. In 1955, another lot of seed came from the USDA Introduction Station in Homestead, Florida. The six mature trees on the Arboretum grounds originated from these sources. They vary somewhat in fruit size, and leaf form and size.

The *Harpullia* is easily identified by its beautiful, glossy green leaves embel-

lished with hundreds of ornamental reddish-orange capsules. The tree is grown and appreciated in its native area but nurseries in our country have chosen not to propagate the species. Consequently, it is not often seen outside botanical gardens.

With its moderate fast growth, spreading canopy, freedom from pests and disease, and showy fruits, *Harpullia arborea* makes a fine street tree and an attractive shade tree for larger gardens and parks. It does best in full sun in a variety of soils with moderate watering and it is hardy to at least 27 degrees F. Seeds grow easily as attested by the dense carpet of seedlings and saplings under the canopy. Its only drawback may be the litter from the falling seeds and capsules.

Harpullia should be better known and more widely grown. We should follow the example of the inhabitants where the tree is native and who appreciate its fine features.

Harpullia is available in the Arboretum Garden and Gift Shop.

A free *Harpullia* lecture and tour of these plants on the Arboretum grounds will be presented by John Provine, Arboretum Superintendent, on Saturday, October 27, 1990 at 10:00 am in the Lecture Hall.

Author James Bauml is taxonomist and senior biologist at the Arboretum.

Special Thanks go to Arboretum volunteer Constance Wood for writing the Coloring California columns for CAF News. The Coloring California series featuring Arboretum introductions will now be written by a member of the Arboretum horticultural staff.

Register to Vote

Voter registration forms may be requested by calling the toll free voter registration hotline 1-800-345-VOTE. The last day to register to vote in the November 6, 1990 general election is October 9, 1990.



Arboretum Welcomes New Assistant Superintendent

Timothy Lee Lindsay joined the Arboretum staff as Assistant Superintendent in August. Mr. Lee comes to us from the Department of Natural Resource Studies, Pensacola Junior College, Florida. His educational background includes a B.S. in Plant

and Soil Science and an M.S. in Forestry from Southern Illinois University. Mr. Lee's primary responsibilities on the grounds will include working with contractors and over seeing the gardening staff.



1988. "Arboretum welcomes new assistant superintendent." *News* 1990:fall, 7.

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