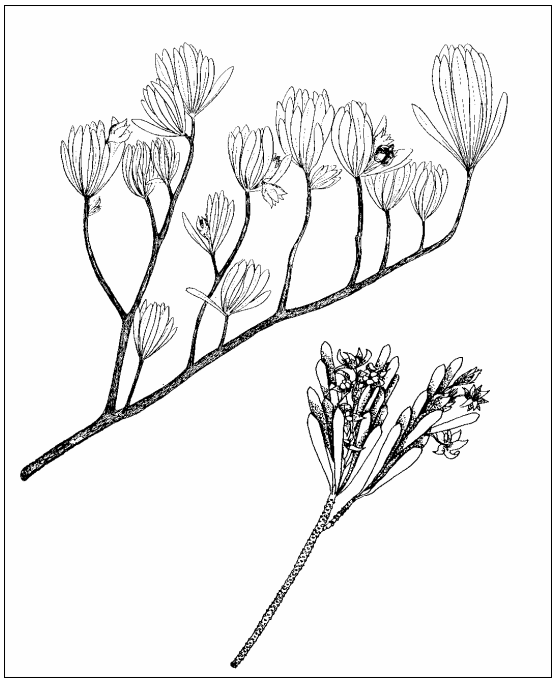
***Suriana maritima* L.** bay-cedar
SURIANACEAE (formerly in SIMAROUBACEAE)

Synonyms: none



General Description.—Bay-cedar, is also known as tassel-plant, guitarán, temporana, jovero, cuabilla, pantsil, cucharo, palo corra, oseille bord de mer, romarin noir, and crises marine. It is an evergreen shrub usually 1 to 2 m in height but sometimes reaching 6 m. Multistemmed and much-branched, it has a prostrate to ovoid crown. Stems have a dark brown, rough and flakey bark. Heartwood is dark red or reddish brown; the sapwood being somewhat lighter. The wood is hard, heavy, fine-textured, strong, and durable. The gray-green, succulent, downy foliage has a salty taste and a cedar-like fragrance when crushed. Leaves are crowded at the ends of the branches, sessile, narrowly obovate, and 1 to 4 cm long. Inflorescences, solitary or few-flowered cymes, are almost hidden among the leaves. The small, five-merous, bisexual flowers are yellow and develop into clusters of five hard, 3- to 4-mm, dry drupes surrounded by five gray sepals. (Gilman 1999, Howard 1988, Liogier 1988, Little and others 1974).

Range.—Bay-cedar is native to the shores of southern Florida, Bermuda, the Bahamas, the West Indies, the eastern side of Mexico through Brazil, East Africa, tropical Asia, Australia, and many of the islands of the Indian and Pacific Oceans (not Hawaii) (Howard 1988, Stevens and others 2001). The species has been planted widely as an ornamental. It is listed as endangered in the wild in Florida (Smithsonian Institution 2002).

Ecology.—Bay-cedar is strictly costal. It grows on beaches, dunes, sandy thickets (Nelson 1996), and rocky headlands. It tolerates moderately salty soils, storm-surge overwash, heavy salt spray, blowing sand, high surface heat, drought, and strong winds (Wildflower Nervana 2002). If planted and given protection from competition, it will grow well on inland sites (Nelson 1996) on a wide range of well-drained soils. The species requires full sun to grow and flower. Bay-cedar is rare to uncommon in much of its habitat, but occasionally forms thickets.

Reproduction.—Bay-cedar flowers and fruits intermittently throughout the year (Little and others 1974). The fruits are buoyant and remain viable for long periods in sea water enabling colonization of tropical beaches throughout the world (Nelson 1996).

Growth and Management.—Growth rate of bay-cedar is described as moderate. The species is currently being propagated by seeds to produce nursery plants. The recommended spacing for ornamentals is 90 to 150 cm. Irrigation is recommended during establishment but afterwards is not needed (Gilman 1999).

Benefits.—Bay-cedar helps stabilize beaches and costal dunes, and furnishes food and cover for wildlife. It is widely planted as an ornamental for hedges, screens, borders, accents, seminatural covers, and potted plants. The fruits attract birds that feed on them (Gilman 1999). The foliage furnishes food for blue and hairstreak butterfly larva (Schaefer and others 2002). Key deer (*Odocolleus virginanus clavium*) and probably other ruminants will not eat the foliage of bay-cedar (Schaus and others 2002). Herbalists employ extracts of the leaves and bark to treat rheumatism and skin ulcers and to stop bleeding (Liogier 1990).

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