

# Bottlebrush

*Info Sheet*  
**Callistemon spp.**

The Bottlebrushes consist of a number of evergreen trees and shrubs, some of which are used in Florida landscapes. Of the many known species and varieties, four are suggested for use throughout Brevard County. The **Weeping Bottlebrush** (*Callistemon viminalis*) which attains a height of 20 feet, is frequently used as a small tree in Brevard County, leaves are small and thin and are arranged alternately along weeping branches. Flowers are usually deep red in color on terminal spikes that cascade downward on each branch. The **upright Bottlebrush** (*Callistemon rigidus*) is also considered to be a small tree to about 15 feet in height. This tree is very similar to the Weeping Bottlebrush, although the growth habit is denser with upright branches rather than weeping branches. The **Red Cluster Bottlebrush** (*Callistemon sp.*) is used as a large shrub to 15 feet in height. Growth habit is considered dense from the ground up and flowering occurs more frequently than other varieties of Bottlebrush. The **Dwarf Bottlebrush** (*Callistemon citrinus* 'Little John') is a unique form of bottle brush that grows to only 3 feet in height with a 5 foot spread. Plants flower heaviest during spring and summer months with periodic flowering throughout the year. All bottlebrushes require good drainage and plenty of sunlight for proper growth and flower production. For the most part, Bottlebrushes are considered cold hardy throughout Brevard County. They also have a fair salt tolerance and may be used in coastal areas with some protection from salt spray.

## PLANTING

Best growth can be expected when plants are set in a well-drained, improved soil in full or half-day sun. Plants or trees should be placed in the ground at soil level and mulch should be applied around root area to keep soil moist. Mix Espoma Bio-tone Starter in to the soil when planting. This will help promote strong healthy roots. Water plants thoroughly every day for the first week. For the next two to four weeks, water at the rate of two to three thorough waterings per week.

## FERTILIZING

Bottlebrushes may be fertilized 2 to 4 times per year. Fertilize March, May and September. Use 1 to 3 pounds of **Espoma Tree-Tone** and distribute lightly over the entire root area.

## PLANT PROBLEMS

**Nematodes** - Microscopic round worms that damage the root system causing decline and eventual death of plant. Solution - each year apply **Nem-A-Cide** to the soil per proper application rate. The renewal mulch each year as well as general good care will help combat nematodes.

**Root Rot** - A disease affecting the root system causing dieback and sometimes death of plant. Usually caused by overwatering. Solution - Keep soil moist but not continually soggy and wet. There is no chemical control available once disease is present.

**Leaf Spot** - A fungus that affects the leaves causing small spots on leaves. Solution - Spray with Liquid Copper fungicide per proper application rate.

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