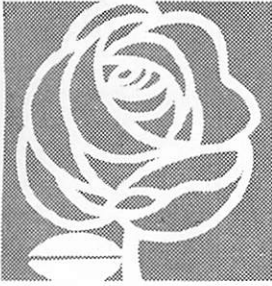


# Flower & Nursery Report

for commercial growers  
**spring 1980**



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## CASSIA ODORATA—A NEWCOMER

Wesley A. Humphrey

*Cassia odorata* is native to Australia but appears to be well adapted to southern California and Arizona conditions. This new plant is being introduced into the landscape through the University of California plant introduction program.

A nurseryman friend in Sydney, Australia, John Teulon, brought me the seed of this low-growing shrub in 1976. The seed was germinated and a trial planting made on May 13, 1977, at the University of California South Coast Field Station near Santa Ana.

*Cassia odorata* is a hardy, reliable plant usually less than 3 feet (1 meter) tall with a spreading habit and with fairly dense texture according to the publication *One Hundred and Fifty Australian Plants for Gardens* (published by the David G. Stead Memorial

Wildlife Research Foundation of Australia, Sydney). Observations at the South Coast Field Station indicate more growth in size: *Cassia odorata* has spread to a diameter of 15 feet with a height of 3.5 feet in 3.5 years. Leaves are dark green and compound. The plant produces abundant medium-size flowers, 0.75 inch across, in the spring and continues to flower right through to winter.

*Cassia odorata* grows best in a light to medium soil in a dry, sunny location. It is suitable for bank planting or as a specimen plant for coastal or inland parks and gardens.

Our observations here coincide with those of Stead Foundation observers in Australia. The plant is being grown successfully in Santa Barbara managed as a dry landscape planting, according to Ray Sodomka of

Santa Barbara. John Kister of El Modena Gardens Nursery reports the plant is performing well in a landscape planting near Phoenix.

*Cassia odorata* has performed well at the South Coast Field Station with a minimum of special care. To date, it has been free of pests. The flowering period is the same in southern California and Arizona as that reported by the Stead Foundation. Propagation is easily handled from either seed or cuttings, and the plant is being grown successfully in containers as well as in the landscape.

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