**Hesperaloe funifera** (K. Koch) W. Trelease  
(*Agave funifera, Hesperaloe davyi, Yucca funifera*)

- Giant Hesperaloe, also known as Samandoque, is a much coarser erect cousin to *H. parviflora*, having large sword-shaped concave leaves varying from a yellow-green to dark green in color; leaves produce stringy marginal filaments at maturity and terminate with a slightly shredded tip; individual leaves are wider, more vertically held and taller than those of *H. parviflora*, reaching 3’ to 6’ in height, forming tightly suckering clumps that tend to be more narrow in relation to their height than those of *H. parviflora*.

- Inflorescences of *H. funifera* are correspondingly larger than on *H. parviflora*, reaching 12’ to 15’ in height, but lack the ornamental appeal of Red Yucca; inflorescences are only sparingly branched and the 1” wide flowers are sparsely borne and the tepals are recurved forming a more open flower than the attractive tubular to narrow trumpet-shaped pink, red or yellows of *H. parviflora*, those of *H. funifera* are greenish white or rarely white with a pink flush; flower stalks are noticeable due to their size, but are not particularly ornamental.

- Although cold tolerance has not been fully tested, *H. funifera* is probably useful in USDA hardiness zones 7(6) to 13, provided a sunny spot with good soil drainage is provided; plants are heat and drought tolerant and can be grown in a wide range of soil pH; inflorescences should be deadheaded after bloom as the large coarse textured foliage is the primary asset; the specific epithet derives from the Latin word funifer meaning rope, in reference to the strong fibers of the leaf margins.

- Giant Hesperaloe is mostly a native of Mexico, being found naturally in Texas in a single Trans-Pecos location, but is being more widely planted of recent years; Giant Hesperaloe is sometimes used for fiber extraction; the bold erect foliage can be used as a xeric accent or plants can be grown on tight spacings to make a small to medium size hedge of sorts; hybrids of *H. funifera* × *H. parviflora* are reported in the literature and tend to resemble *H. funifera* in size and form, but with pinkish flowers; Pink Parade® is an example of these hybrids being a larger plant than *H. parviflora* with pink flowers on 6’ to 8’ spikes or very sparsely branched panicles; flowers on Pink Parade® are rather sparse and panicles tend to set fruit and need to be deadheaded.

Copyright 2015 by Michael A. Arnold with all rights reserved; intended for future inclusion in *Landscape Plants For Texas And Environments, Fourth Edition.*