Japanese Cedar

Cryptomeria japonica

Height: 60 feet

Spread: 30 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 6

Description:

A stately member of the Cypress family, with drooping evergreen foliage and a spreading pyramidal habit of growth; the species itself is a tall tree, a wide variety of cultivars is available

Ornamental Features

Japanese Cedar is primarily valued in the landscape for its distinctively pyramidal habit of growth. It has bluish-green evergreen foliage. The scale-like sprays of foliage turn antique red in the fall, which persists throughout the winter. The peeling antique red bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Japanese Cedar is an evergreen tree with a strong central leader and a distinctive and refined pyramidal form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree. When pruning is necessary, it is recommended to only trim back the new growth of the current season, other than to remove any dieback. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Japanese Cedar is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Vertical Accent



Japanese Cedar
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Japanese Cedar foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Japanese Cedar will grow to be about 60 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 feet. It has a high canopy with a typical clearance of 6 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live to a ripe old age of 100 years or more; think of this as a heritage tree for future generations!

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers to grow in average to moist conditions, and shouldn't be allowed to dry out. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.