Stunted Willow

Salix retusa



Stunted Willow
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 6 inches

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: syn. Salix kitaibeliana

Description:

A very different kind of willow, this is a very prostrate shrub that spreads to fill in an area, features showy deep green rounded glossy foliage on yellow-gold stems; particularly effective trailing over walls or around rocks

Ornamental Features

Stunted Willow features unusual yellow catkins along the branches in early spring, which emerge from distinctive silver flower buds. It has attractive dark green deciduous foliage. The small glossy narrow leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color. The gold stems are very effective and add winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Stunted Willow is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a ground-hugging habit of growth. It lends an extremely fine and delicate texture to the landscape composition which should be used to full effect.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spreading

Stunted Willow is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover

Planting & Growing

Stunted Willow will grow to be only 6 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. It is quite adaptable, prefering to grow in average to wet conditions, and will even tolerate some standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America.