Japanese Larch

Larix kaempferi



Japanese Larch
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 70 feet

Spread: 35 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Description:

A tall and narrowly upright coniferous tree with deciduous needles which progress from green in spring to blue-green in summer, finally turning bright yellow in fall; prefers moist locations and sandier soils; looks a little bare in winter without needles

Ornamental Features

Japanese Larch is primarily valued in the landscape for its distinctively pyramidal habit of growth. It has bluish-green deciduous foliage which emerges light green in spring. The needle-like leaves turn an outstanding yellow in the fall. The rough brick red bark and gold branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Japanese Larch is an open deciduous tree with a strong central leader and a distinctive and refined pyramidal form. It lends an extremely fine and delicate texture to the landscape composition which can make it a great accent feature on this basis alone.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and usually looks its best without pruning, although it will tolerate pruning. Deer don't particularly care for this plant and will usually leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Japanese Larch is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- Vertical Accent

Planting & Growing

Japanese Larch will grow to be about 70 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 35 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 70 years or more.

This tree 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, but has a definite preference for acidic soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided. This species is not originally from North America.