Mountain Cabbage Tree

Cussonia paniculata



Mountain Cabbage Tree foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 6 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Description:

A slow growing, sparsely branched tree, featuring compound leaves composed of a number of lobed leaflets at the end of long petioles; foliage is sea green with bright gray-green reverses; attractive corky bark is fissured and thick; protect from frost

Ornamental Features

Mountain Cabbage Tree has attractive bluish-green foliage with grayish green undersides and tinges of silver on a tree with a round habit of growth. The lobed compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain bluish-green throughout the winter. It produces deep purple berries from mid to late spring. The furrowed gray bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.



Mountain Cabbage Tree
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Mountain Cabbage Tree is an evergreen tree with a more or less rounded form. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Mountain Cabbage Tree is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Rock/Alpine Gardens
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Mountain Cabbage Tree will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 6 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 3 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 20 years.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. Like most succulents and cacti, this plant prefers to grow in poor soils and should therefore never be fertilized. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America.

Mountain Cabbage Tree is a fine choice for the yard, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.