Speckled-Leaf Catalpa

Catalpa speciosa 'Pulverulenta'



Speckled-Leaf Catalpa foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 45 feet

Spread: 25 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Western Catalpa

Description:

An interesting variant on the northern catalpa with large coarse leaves curiously speckled with white splotches; otherwise has similar orchid-like flowers and long, narrow beanpod fruits; a conversation tree to say the least

Ornamental Features

Speckled-Leaf Catalpa features showy panicles of fragrant white orchid-like flowers with yellow throats and purple spots rising above the foliage in mid summer. It has attractive white-spotted green foliage. The large heart-shaped leaves are highly ornamental but do not develop any appreciable fall color. The fruits are showy brown pods displayed from mid summer to late winter. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up.

Landscape Attributes

Speckled-Leaf Catalpa is a deciduous tree with a shapely oval form. Its strikingly bold and coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced landscape composition.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting hummingbirds to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Messy

Speckled-Leaf Catalpa is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Speckled-Leaf Catalpa will grow to be about 45 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 25 feet. It has a high canopy with a typical clearance of 5 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 50 years or more.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It is an amazingly adaptable plant, tolerating both dry conditions and even some standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil type or pH, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selection of a native North American species.