French Pussy Willow

Salix caprea



French Pussy Willow flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Goat Willow

Description:

The European pussy willow of much renown, producing large, fuzzy catkins in late winter that herald spring; upright spreading habit, versatile and adaptable, not quite as hardy as the native species but considered much showier with its larger flowers

Ornamental Features

French Pussy Willow features delicate tan catkins along the branches from late winter to early spring before the leaves. The flowers are excellent for cutting. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The pointy leaves turn yellow in fall. The smooth bark and deep purple branches add an interesting dimension to the landscape.



French Pussy Willow
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

French Pussy Willow is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

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;

- Messy

French Pussy Willow is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening
- Naturalizing And Woodland Gardens

Planting & Growing

French Pussy Willow will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It tends to be a little leggy, with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

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 highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is not originally from North America.