Gay Head Chinese Dogwood

Cornus kousa 'Gay Head'



Gay Head Chinese Dogwood flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 25 feet

Spread: 20 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Other Names: Kousa Dogwood

Description:

Noted for interesting white bracts that are ruffled and curled; a floriferous selection; this tree has a more upright habit and is covered in raspberry-like fruit in fall; shows some resistance to anthracnose

Ornamental Features

Gay Head Chinese Dogwood features showy clusters of white flowers with white bracts held atop the branches in late spring. It features an abundance of magnificent crimson berries from early to mid fall. It has green deciduous foliage. The pointy leaves turn an outstanding brick red in the fall. The peeling gray bark adds an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Gay Head Chinese Dogwood is a multi-stemmed deciduous tree with an upright spreading habit of growth. 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 only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Gay Head Chinese Dogwood is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Gay Head Chinese Dogwood will grow to be about 25 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 20 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 1 foot from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is very fussy about its soil conditions and must have rich, acidic soils to ensure success, and is subject to chlorosis (yellowing) of the foliage in alkaline soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.