Black Pussy Willow

Salix gracilistyla 'Melanostachys'

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 4

Description:

This interesting variety will often bloom before the snow melts; no other willow compares to the display of orange anthers against the jet black catkins; slow growing and easily controlled by selective pruning, this variety is suitable for smaller areas

Ornamental Features

Black Pussy Willow features delicate black catkins with orange anthers 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 brick red branches add an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Black 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

Black Pussy Willow is recommended for the following landscape applications;



Black Pussy Willow flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Black Pussy Willow
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Black 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 medium 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 is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.



Black Pussy Willow foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder