



Cercidiphyllum japonicum Katsuratree¹

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INTRODUCTION

Katsuratree grows best in a sunny exposure and in a moist soil, but is considered drought-tolerant once established (Fig. 1). The tree reaches a mature height and spread of 40 to 60 feet with a symmetrical canopy and new growth is reddish turning a light pale green. Fall color is a spectacular yellow, with some red. The growth rate is moderately rapid when young but slows down with age. The tree has a shallow root system and some of the roots can grow to six inches in diameter or more above the soil. The trunk normally flares out at the base, gracefully dividing into the numerous shallow roots often prominent at the soil surface.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*

Pronunciation: ser-sih-dih-FILL-um
juh-PAWN-ih-kum

Common name(s): Katsuratree

Family: *Cercidiphyllaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 4B through 8 (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; shade tree; specimen; residential street tree

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

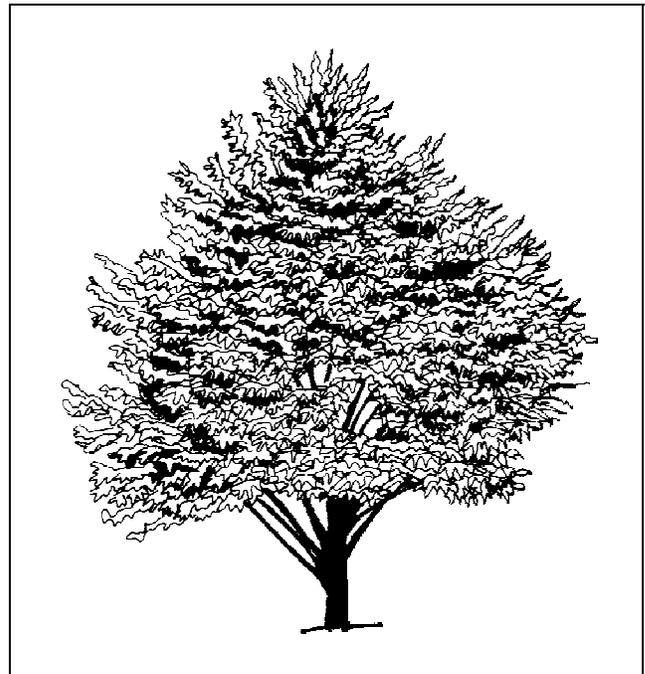


Figure 1. Middle-aged Katsuratree.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 40 to 60 feet

Spread: 35 to 60 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical canopy with a regular (or smooth) outline, and individuals have more or less identical crown forms

Crown shape: oval; spreading; pyramidal; upright

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: fast

Texture: medium

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: crenate

Leaf shape: orbiculate; ovate

Leaf venation: palmate; reticulate

Leaf type and persistence: deciduous

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: yellow

Fall characteristic: showy

Flower

Flower color: green

Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated; pod

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; inconspicuous and not showy; no significant litter

problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; routinely grown with, or trainable to be grown with, multiple trunks; showy trunk; tree wants to grow with several trunks but can be trained to grow with a single trunk; no thorns

Pruning requirement: requires pruning to develop strong structure

Breakage: susceptible to breakage either at the crotch due to poor collar formation, or the wood itself is weak and tends to break

Current year twig color: brown

Current year twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate



Figure 3. Foliage of Katsuratree.

Katsuratree is intolerant of drought and should be protected from direct exposure to wind. Leaves often drop in mid to late summer in response to dry weather. Not suited for compacted soil since the shallow roots will be a nuisance for lawn and sidewalk maintenance. Provide irrigation and keep the soil beneath the canopy mulched. Coarse root system calls for production in fabric containers, frequent root pruning field-grown stock, or growing in air root-pruned containers.

The cultivar 'Pendula' grows 15 to 25 feet tall and displays a beautifully graceful, weeping form but it is hard to find.

Pests and diseases

None serious. Occasionally chewing insects eat the foliage.

Other

Roots: surface roots can lift sidewalks or interfere with mowing

Winter interest: tree has winter interest due to unusual form, nice persistent fruits, showy winter trunk, or winter flowers

Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Katsuratree has an oval or pyramidal form in youth becoming more upright spreading with age and makes a good shade tree for residential property due to the medium stature. Male trees are more upright, female trees are more spreading. It may also have uses as a street tree where there is adequate soil space to prevent surface roots from raising walks and curbing. Select single stemmed specimens for street tree use and be sure that the major limbs are well spaced along a central trunk to prevent branches from splitting from the tree. Multistemmed trees are also sold and they make nice specimens for lawn and park areas, not street trees. Katsuratree has proven to be fairly pest free. Transplant in spring.