



Chamaecyparis nootkatensis 'Pendula' Nootka Falsecypress¹

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INTRODUCTION

A graceful, weeping, pyramidal evergreen, Nootka Falsecypress can reach 60 to 90 feet in the wild but stays within a height of 35 feet and a spread of 20 feet in cultivation (Fig. 1). The trunk remains straight and dominant throughout the life of the tree. The long, pendulous, flattened branches are clothed with dark bluish-green or grayish-green, scalelike "needles", which give off a rank odor when bruised or crushed. Nootka Falsecypress is native to coastal Alaska and Washington, performing best in areas with high humidity and moist soil conditions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*
'Pendula'

Pronunciation: kam-eh-SIP-uh-riss
noot-kuh-TEN-sis

Common name(s): Nootka Falsecypress,
Alaska-Cedar

Family: *Cupressaceae*

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

Origin: native to North America

Uses: Bonsai; container or above-ground planter; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; specimen

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree



Figure 1. Young Nootka Falsecypress.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 35 to 50 feet

Spread: 15 to 20 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular outline or silhouette

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Crown shape: pyramidal; weeping

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: medium

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: scale-like

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen; fragrant

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: blue or blue-green; green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: < .5 inch

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

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

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: bark is thin and easily damaged from mechanical impact; droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown; green

Current year twig thickness: thin

Wood specific gravity: 0.44

Culture

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

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

Drought tolerance: moderate

Scorch may look like a disease but is caused by excessive direct sun, freezing stress, drought or mites. Freezing stress can be prevented by shading small plants in winter.

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

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: long-term health usually not affected by pests

USE AND MANAGEMENT

It makes a striking specimen, with a distinct, graceful, weeping habit. Even one plant will soften any landscape. Use it near water or around a patio or as a lawn specimen in residential or commercial landscapes. It reportedly does best with some shade from the afternoon sun, particularly in the southern part of its range. Trees in full sun look great in zone 5.

Pests

Juniper scale can be controlled by applying pesticides when the crawlers are active.

The bagworm webs foliage and debris together to make a case. The covering makes the insect difficult to control. The nests can be picked off by hand.

Diseases

Blight can be a problem on young plants in nurseries or old plants in landscape situations. In young plants, branch tips turn brown and die back until the whole branch or young tree is killed. Tip blight infects trees during wet weather. The disease causes sooty pustules on the leaves, bark and cones.

Trees over five years old are less susceptible. When older trees in landscapes are affected by tip blight, entire trees are seldom killed.