Pinus densiflora ‘Pendula’

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Introduction

Japanese Red Pine reaches a height and spread of 30 to 50 feet in the landscape growing much taller in the woods. Needles are arranged in pairs and remain on the tree for about three years. A distinguishing feature of this tree is the often crooked or sweeping trunk which shows reddish-orange peeling bark. Because lower branches are held nearly horizontal on the trunk forming a picturesque silhouette in the landscape it is used best as a specimen, not as a mass planting. Needles may turn yellowish during winter on some soils.

General Information

Scientific name: Pinus densiflora ‘Pendula’
Pronunciation: PYE-nuss den-siff-FLOR-ruh
Common name(s): Weeping Japanese Red Pine
Family: Pinaceae
Plant type: tree
USDA hardiness zones: 3B through 7A (Fig. 1)
Planting month for zone 7: year round
Origin: not native to North America
Uses: bonsai
Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

Description

Height: 6 to 10 feet
Spread: 10 to 15 feet
Plant habit: weeping; spreading
Plant density: dense

Growth rate: slow
Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: spiral
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: needle-like (filiform)
Leaf venation: parallel
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow
Flower characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval
Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches
Fruit cover: dry or hard
Fruit color: tan
Fruit characteristic: persists on the plant

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; no thorns
**Use and Management**

The tree prefers a site with full sun and a well-drained, slightly acid soil. Clay soil is usually not suitable unless it is very well drained.

There are a few cultivars: ‘Alboterminata’ - yellowish needle tips; ‘Aurea’ - yellow needles; ‘Oculis-draconis’ - Dragon’s Eye Pine - two yellow lines on needles; ‘Umbraculifera’ - Tanyosho Pine - 20 feet tall, multi-trunked.

Propagation is by seed.

This tree is usually pest-free, with occasional scale, but the list of potential problems is long.

**Pests and Diseases**

Some of its diseases are needle blight and rusts. Canker diseases may cause dieback of landscape Pines. Keep trees healthy and prune out the infected branches.

Needle cast is common on small trees and plantation or forest trees. Infected needles yellow and fall off.