



## Katsura tree

The katsura tree, native to Japan, makes an excellent specimen or shade tree in Midwestern landscapes. Its foliage offers an array of color throughout the year. In spring, heart-shaped leaves emerge reddish-purple, changing to blue-green as they mature. In autumn the color display changes again as leaves turn clear yellow or apricot color.

This plant has some cultivated varieties. [Go to list of cultivars.](#)

**Botanical name:** *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*

**All common names:** katsura tree, katsuratree, katsura-tree, Japanese katsura

**Family (English):** Katsura tree

**Family (Botanic):** Cercidiphyllaceae

**Planting Site:** Residential and parks, City parkway, Wide median

**Tree or Plant Type:** Tree

**Foliage:** Deciduous (seasonally loses leaves)

**Native Locale:** Non-native

**Landscape Uses:** Parkway/street, Shade tree, Specimen

**Size Range:** Large tree (more than 40 feet)

**Mature Height:** 40-60 feet

**Mature Width:** 20-30 feet

**Light Exposure:** Full sun (6 hrs direct light daily), Partial sun/shade (4-6 hrs light daily)

**Hardiness Zones:** Zone 4, Zone 5 (Chicago), Zone 6, Zone 7, Zone 8

**Soil Preference:** Moist, well-drained soil

**Tolerances:** Wet sites, Alkaline soil, Clay soil, Road salt

**Acid Soils:** Tolerant

**Alkaline Soils:** Moderately Tolerant

**Salt Spray:** Tolerant

**Soil Salt:** Moderately Tolerant

**Drought Conditions:** Intolerant

**Poor Drainage:** Tolerant

**Ornamental Interest:** Spring blossoms, Fall color

**Seasons of Interest:** early fall, mid fall

**Flower Color & Fragrance:** Inconspicuous

**Shape or Form:** Oval, Pyramidal, Round

**Growth Rate:** Moderate, Fast

**Transplants Well:** Yes



**Wildlife:** Insect pollinators

#### More Information:

##### Tree & Plant Care

Spring planting is best to allow root development. The Katsura tree is shallow-rooted and will benefit with a layer of mulch to maintain a cool root environment. Additionally, this tree is drought-sensitive and should be watered in dry conditions.

##### Disease, pests and problems

Leaf scorch is common in hot, dry sites.

No common serious pests.

##### Native geographic location and habitat

Native to China and Japan.

##### Bark color and texture

Bark is light gray and flaky to slightly shaggy.

##### Katsura tree (*Cercidiphyllum*)

PHOTO: JOHN HAGSTROM

##### Leaf or needle arrangement, size, shape, and texture

Opposite to sub-opposite leaf arrangement; simple, 2 to 4 inch, heart-shaped leaves emerge reddish, changing to a blue-green. Leaf margin has rounded teeth. Fall color is a clear yellow.

##### Flower arrangement, shape, and size

Male and female flowers on separate trees. Both genders fairly inconspicuous.

##### Fruit, cone, nut, and seed descriptions

Small (3/4 inch) pods on female trees.

##### Cultivars and their differences

**Weeping Katsura Tree** (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum* 'Pendulum'): 15 to 25 feet high and 20 to 25 feet wide; weeping form.

**Red Fox Katsura Tree** (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum* 'Rot fuchs'): An upright oval reaching 30 feet high and 16 feet wide; bronze purple spring foliage turning bronze-green in summer. Fall color is orange-bronze.



Location of *Cercidiphyllum japonicum* (Katsura tree) at the Arboretum

VIEW MAP

