**Cupressus sempervirens** ‘Glauca’

‘Glauca’ Italian Cypress

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson

**INTRODUCTION**

With its narrow columnar habit of growth, this evergreen forms tall, dark green columns 25 to 40 feet in height but are often shorter in the east (Fig. 1). ‘Glauca’ has blue-green foliage and tight columnar form. Trees are normally no more than three feet wide. The scale-like leaves lend a very fine texture to any setting. Planted three feet apart, they make a dense screen. Italian Cypress is often used for framing, as a strong accent around large buildings, or in the formal landscape but does not lend itself well to many home landscapes. It quickly grows much too tall for most residential landscapes, looking much like a green telephone pole.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Scientific name:** Cupressus sempervirens ‘Glauca’

**Pronunciation:** koo-PRESS-us sem-per-VYE-renz

**Common name(s):** ‘Glauca’ Italian Cypress

**Family:** Cupressaceae

**USDA hardiness zones:** 7B through 11 (Fig. 2)

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Uses:** screen

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

**DESCRIPTION**

**Height:** 25 to 40 feet

**Spread:** 3 to 6 feet

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

**Crown shape:** columnar

**Crown density:** dense

**Growth rate:** medium

**Texture:** fine

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Cupressus sempervirens 'Glauca' -- 'Glauca' Italian Cypress

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: whorled
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: scale-like
Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
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: oval
Fruit length: .5 to 1 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: grow mostly upright and will not droop; 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; gray
Current year twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; acidic; alkaline; well-drained
Drought tolerance: high
Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerance: good
Other

- **Roots:** surface roots are usually not a problem
- **Winter interest:** no special winter interest
- **Outstanding tree:** not particularly outstanding
- **Invasive potential:** little, if any, potential at this time
- **Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** not known to be susceptible
- **Pest resistance:** very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect tree health or aesthetics

**USE AND MANAGEMENT**

Growing in full sun on various well-drained soils, Italian Cypress should be planted in a well-prepared site and watered periodically until well-established. Italian Cypress should not be pruned. It is very susceptible to mites and trees are often infested.

Many cultivars are available: ‘Stricta’ is very popular; ‘Horizontalis’ has horizontally-spreading branches.

Propagation is by cuttings or layering.

**Pests**

- Bagworms are occasionally a problem for Italian Cypress. Mites are often a problem.

**Diseases**

- Root rot can be a problem for Italian Cypress in poorly-drained soil. Canker has killed many trees in California.