



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

***Cephalotaxus harringtonia*¹**

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Introduction

Looking like a dwarf form of the Common Podocarpus, the Plum-Yew is a useful shrub for the same purpose as boxwood - a slow-growing, low, formal, evergreen clipped hedge or border (Fig. 1). It can be kept at a height as low as 12 inches. The dark green foliage contrasts well with many other landscape plants.

General Information

Scientific name: *Cephalotaxus harringtonia*

Pronunciation: seff-uh-loe-TACKS-sus hair-ring-TOE-nee-uh

Common name(s): Japanese Plum-Yew

Family: *Cephalotaxaceae*

Plant type: shrub

USDA hardiness zones: 6 through 9 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Origin: native to Florida

Uses: hedge; container or above-ground planter; specimen; border

Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

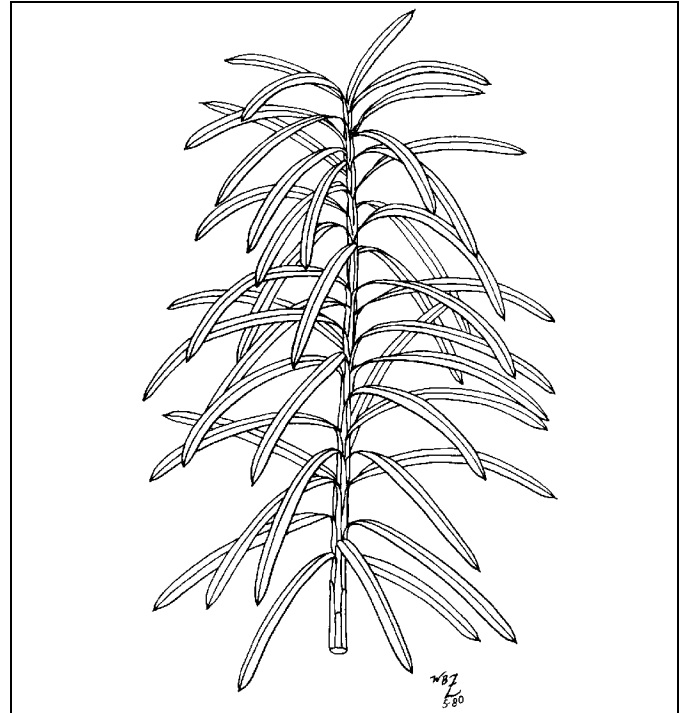


Figure 1. Japanese Plum-Yew.

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Description

Height: 5 to 10 feet

Spread: 5 to 10 feet

Plant habit: upright

Plant density: dense

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf shape: needle-like (filiform)

Leaf venation: parallel

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: unknown

Flower characteristic: spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval

Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches

Fruit cover: fleshy

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not particularly showy; typically multi-trunked or clumping stems

Current year stem/twig color: green

Current year stem/twig thickness: medium

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun; plant grows in the shade

Soil tolerances: slightly alkaline; clay; sand; acidic; loam

Drought tolerance: high

Soil salt tolerances: poor

Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

For best appearance, Japanese Plum-Yew requires fertile soil with good moisture-holding capacity. It thrives in sun or shade and is very versatile. Few nurseries offer this plant.

The cultivar 'Fastigiata' has a narrow and erect form.

Propagation is by softwood cuttings in spring.

Soil nematodes can be a problem.

Pests and Diseases

Plants are susceptible to mushroom root rot.