



Cooperative Extension Service  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## ***Cephalotaxus harringtonia*<sup>1</sup>**

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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

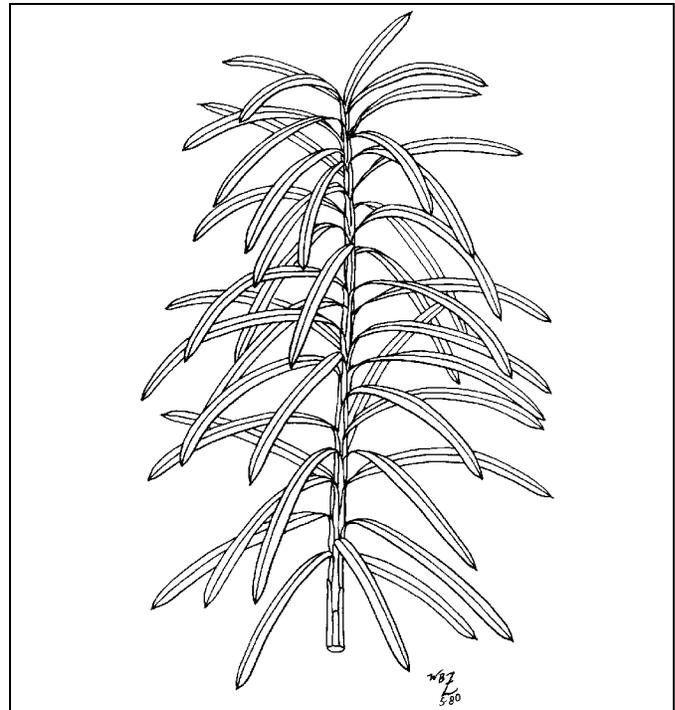
### **Description**

**Height:** 5 to 10 feet

**Spread:** 5 to 10 feet

**Plant habit:** upright

**Plant density:** dense



**Figure 1.** Japanese Plum-Yew.

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** fine

#### **Foliage**

**Leaf arrangement:** alternate

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

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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.