



Sciadopitys verticillata Japanese Umbrella-Pine¹

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INTRODUCTION

This small tree is used for its unusual texture and growth habit (Fig. 1). The tree will grow very slowly to about 25 to 40 feet tall (in 100 years) and spreads about 15 feet. On young plants the branches stick straight out from the single, straight trunk but become more pendulous with age. The tree grows in a tight pyramid which can be utilized in a rock garden or other small residential landscape site. The effect is much like the ribs on an umbrella. Due to the unusual nature of the plant, people either love this tree or won't even look at it.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Sciadopitys verticillata*

Pronunciation: sigh-uh-DOP-ih-tiss
ver-tiss-ill-LAY-tuh

Common name(s): Japanese Umbrella-Pine

Family: *Taxodiaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 5 through 8A (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: container or above-ground planter; specimen;
no proven urban tolerance

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

DESCRIPTION

Height: 25 to 30 feet

Spread: 12 to 15 feet

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

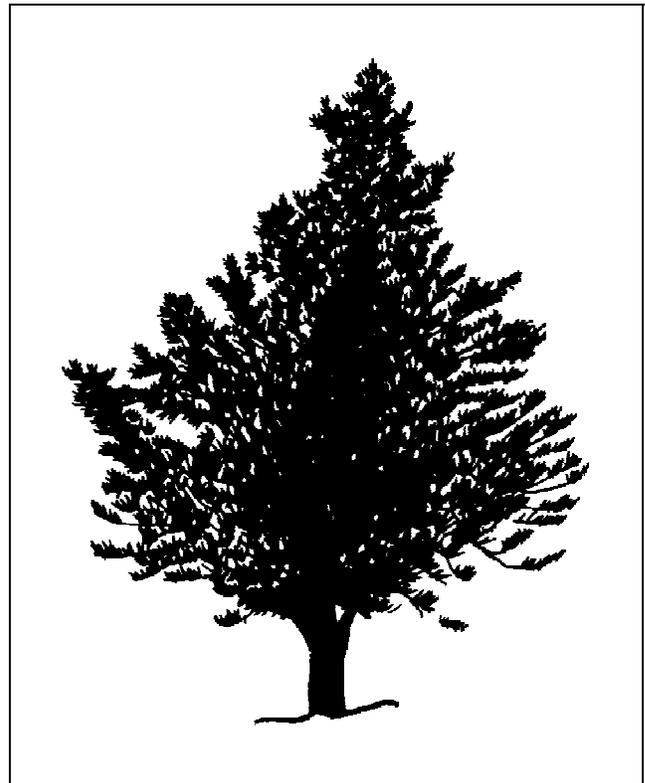


Figure 1. Mature Japanese Umbrella-Pine.

Crown shape: pyramidal

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: slow

Texture: fine

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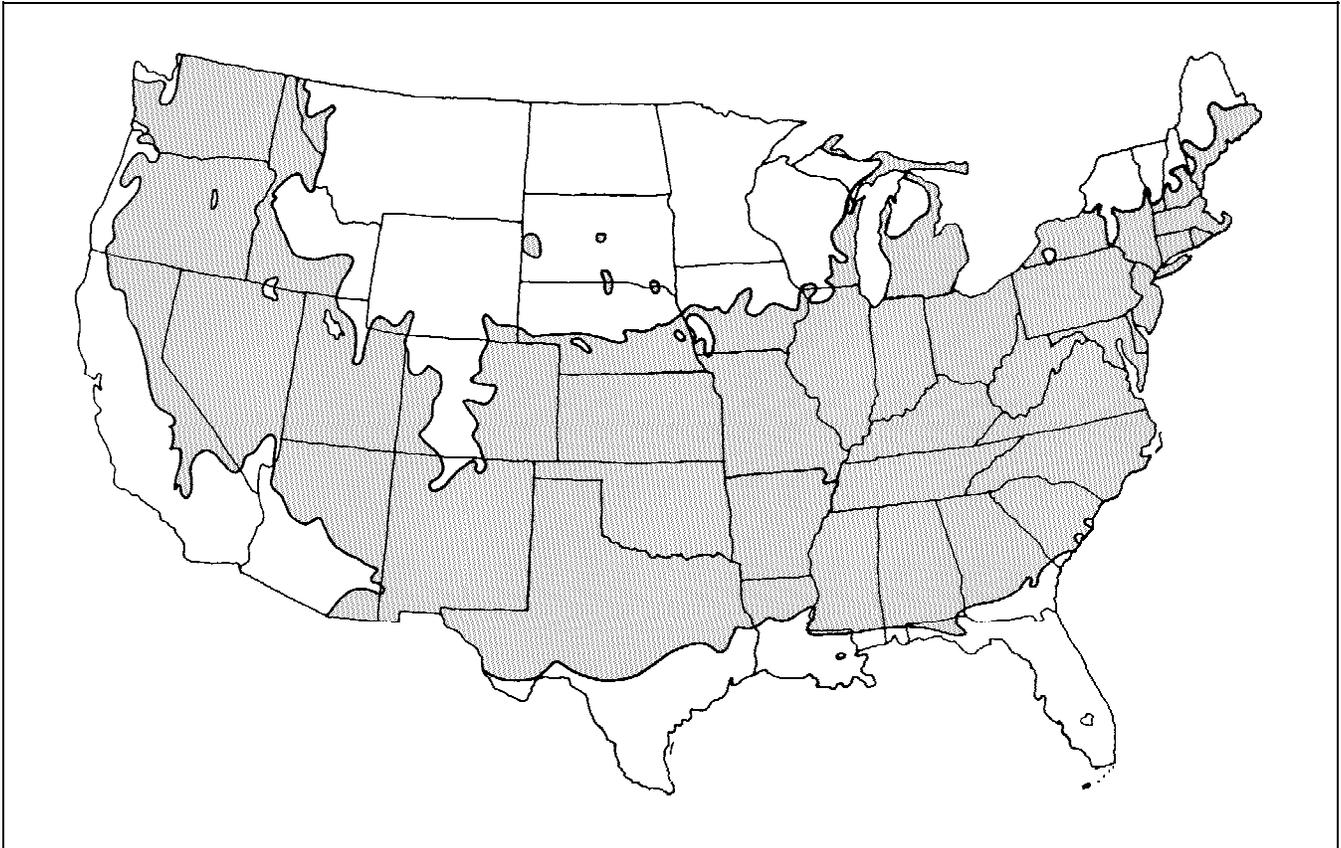


Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: whorled (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: linear

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see; parallel

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen; needle leaf evergreen

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval

Fruit length: 3 to 6 inches; 1 to 3 inches

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: droop as the tree grows, and will require pruning for vehicular or pedestrian clearance beneath the canopy; showy trunk; 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: green

Current year twig thickness: thick

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in part shade/part sun; tree grows in the shade; tree grows in full sun

Soil tolerances: clay; loam; sand; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

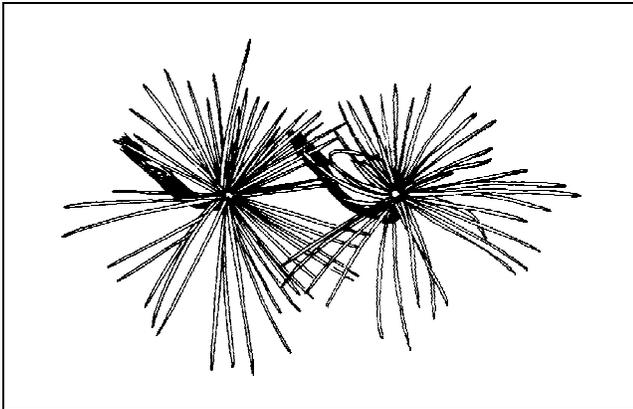


Figure 3. Foliage of Japanese Umbrella-Pine.

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: tree has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

Pest resistance: no pests are normally seen on the tree

USE AND MANAGEMENT

A bit of shade during the hot part of the day will produce the best plants in the southern part of its range. The orange, peeling bark is quite attractive but is usually hidden by the foliage. Provide a moist, acidic soil and protection from the wind. The tree is probably best used as a specimen, occasionally for private, protected gardens for a very special effect. A truly unique tree which grows very slowly, it is rare in cultivation. Only the most patient nursery operators grow this plant.

Propagated by seed or from cuttings.

'Pendula' is listed as a cultivar with pendulous branches.

Pests and Diseases

No serious pests or diseases exist for this tree.