



Thuja plicata 'Canadian Gold' 'Canadian Gold' Giant Arborvitae¹

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INTRODUCTION

A native western North American tree, Giant-Cedar can reach 180 to 200 feet in height in some areas of the Northwest but is more often seen at 50 to 70 feet in height with a spread of 30 to 40 feet (Fig. 1). Forming a broad pyramidal silhouette with strongly horizontal branches, Giant-Cedar is an evergreen with fragrant, bright golden, delicate needles which generously clothe the branches, casting dense shade beneath the tree. The insignificant yellow flowers are followed by small, half-inch cones which seem a little out-of-place on such a large tree.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Thuja plicata* 'Canadian Gold'

Pronunciation: THOO-yuh ply-KAY-tuh

Common name(s): 'Canadian Gold' Giant Arborvitae, 'Canadian Gold' Giant-Cedar, 'Canadian Gold' Western Redcedar

Family: *Cupressaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 6 through 8A (Fig. 2)

Origin: native to North America

Uses: hedge; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; screen; specimen; no proven urban tolerance

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

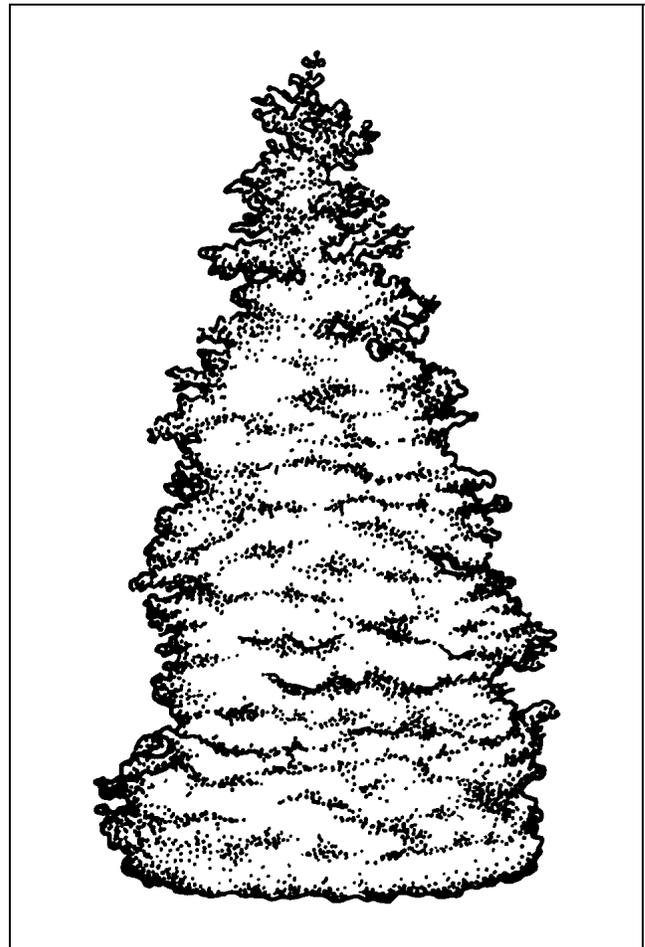


Figure 1. Mature 'Canadian Gold' Giant Arborvitae.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 50 to 70 feet

Spread: 30 to 40 feet

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

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

Crown shape: columnar; pyramidal

Crown density: dense

Growth rate: medium

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: unknown (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: ovate; scale-like

Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen; fragrant

Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches

Leaf color: yellow

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow

Flower characteristics: inconspicuous and not showy; spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: elongated

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; persistent on the tree

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: grow mostly upright and will not droop; should be grown with a single leader; very showy trunk; no thorns

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: brown; green

Current year twig thickness: thin



Figure 3. Foliage of 'Canadian Gold' Giant Arborvitae.

Wood specific gravity: 0.32

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;
occasionally wet; alkaline; well-drained

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

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: long-term health usually not
affected by pests

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Tolerating shearing quite well, Giant-Cedar is ideal for use as a hedge or screen, or a specimen for a large landscape. The wood of this tree is commercially used in North America for the manufacture of roof shingles and siding and the split trunks were often used by Indians for making totem poles or canoes. Due to its narrow crown, it works well close to buildings where soil is frequently alkaline and drainage is poor.

Giant-Cedar naturally occurs on river banks, swamps, and even bogs so should be grown in full sun

or partial shade on moist, well-drained, fertile soil, and prefers a moist atmosphere. Apparently pH adaptable, growth is stunted on dry soils. Provide irrigation during the summer or locate in an area with moist soil and growth should be rapid.

A few of the other cultivars include: 'Atrövirens', excellent shining green foliage; and 'Fastigiata' ('Hogan'), dense columnar silhouette, very resistant to bagworms - they do not appear to infest this cultivar as much as the species.

Propagation is by seed or cuttings.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern but may be occasionally bothered by bagworm.