

Sciadopitys verticillata: Japanese Umbrella-Pine¹

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Introduction

This small tree is used for its unusual texture and growth habit. 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: 5A through 8A (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: little invasive potential

Uses: specimen; container or planter

Availability: not native to North America

Description

Height: 25 to 30 feet

Spread: 12 to 15 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: pyramidal

Crown density: moderate

Growth rate: slow



Figure 1. Mature *Sciadopitys verticillata*: Japanese Umbrella-Pine

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: whorled (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: linear

Leaf venation: parallel, none, or difficult to see

Leaf type and persistence: needled evergreen, evergreen

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Figure 2. Range

Leaf blade length: 2 to 4 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: unknown

Flower characteristics: not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval

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

Fruit covering: dry or hard

Fruit color: brown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches droop; showy; typically one trunk; thorns

Pruning requirement: little required

Breakage: resistant

Current year twig color: green

Current year twig thickness: thick

Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture

Light requirement: full sun, partial sun or partial shade, shade tolerant

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

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: unknown

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: yes

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: free of serious pests and diseases

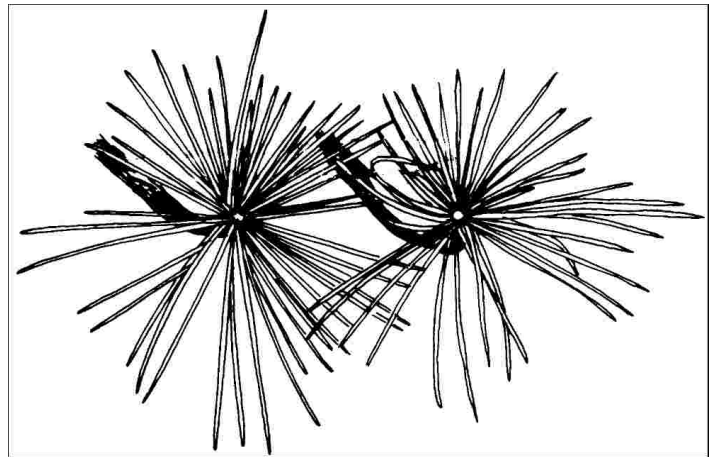


Figure 3. Foliage

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.