x Cupressocyparis leylandii ‘Naylor’s Blue’: ‘Naylor’s Blue’ Leyland Cypress

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Introduction

A moderate to rapidly-growing evergreen when young, ‘Naylor’s Blue’ Leyland Cypress will easily grow three feet per year, even on poor soils, and will ultimately attain a majestic height of 50 feet or more in the west, perhaps somewhat shorter in the east. Leyland Cypress forms a dense, oval or pyramidal outline when left unpruned, but the graceful, pendulous branches will tolerate severe trimming to create a formal hedge, screen or windbreak. The fine, feathery glaucous blue-green foliage is composed of soft, pointed leaves on flattened branchlets and are dark blue-green when mature. Leyland Cypress quickly outgrows its space in small landscapes and is too big for most residential landscapes unless it will be regularly trimmed. Although it can be sheared into a tall screen on small lots, Leyland Cypress should probably be saved for large-scale landscapes where it can be allowed to develop into its natural shape.

General Information

Scientific name: x Cupressocyparis leylandii
Pronunciation: x koo-press-so-SIP-air-iss lay-LAN-dee-eye
Common name(s): ‘Naylor’s Blue’ Leyland Cypress
Family: Cupressaceae
USDA hardiness zones: 6A through 10A (Fig. 2)
Origin: not native to North America
Invasive potential: little invasive potential
Uses: specimen; screen; hedge; highway median; Christmas tree
Availability: not native to North America

Description

Height: 40 to 50 feet
Spread: 15 to 25 feet
Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Figure 1. Middle-aged x Cupressocyparis leylandii ‘Naylor’s Blue’: ‘Naylor’s Blue’ Leyland Cypress
**Cupressocyparis leylandii 'Naylor’s Blue': 'Naylor’s Blue' Leyland Cypress**

**Crown shape:** oval, pyramidal, columnar  
**Crown density:** dense  
**Growth rate:** fast  
**Texture:** fine

**Foliage**
- **Leaf arrangement:** opposite/subopposite (Fig. 3)  
- **Leaf type:** simple  
- **Leaf margin:** entire  
- **Leaf shape:** scale-like  
- **Leaf venation:** none, or difficult to see  
- **Leaf type and persistence:** evergreen  
- **Leaf blade length:** less than 2 inches  
- **Leaf color:** blue or blue-green  
- **Fall color:** no color change  
- **Fall characteristic:** not showy

**Flower**
- **Flower color:** no flowers  
- **Flower characteristics:** no flowers

**Fruit**
- **Fruit shape:** round  
- **Fruit length:** less than .5 inch  
- **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 don't droop; not showy; typically one trunk; thorns  
- **Pruning requirement:** little required  
- **Breakage:** resistant  
- **Current year twig color:** green  
- **Current year twig thickness:** thin  
- **Wood specific gravity:** unknown

**Culture**
- **Light requirement:** full sun, partial sun or partial shade  
- **Soil tolerances:** sand; loam; clay; acidic; alkaline; well-drained  
- **Drought tolerance:** high  
- **Aerosol salt tolerance:** moderate

**Other**
- **Roots:** not a problem  
- **Winter interest:** no  
- **Outstanding tree:** yes  
- **Ozone sensitivity:** unknown  
- **Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant  
- **Pest resistance:** sensitive to pests/diseases

**Use and Management**
Leyland Cypress grows in full sun on a wide range of soils, from acid to alkaline, but looks its best on moderately fertile soil with sufficient moisture. It is surprisingly tolerant of severe pruning, recovering nicely from even severe topping (although this is not recommended), even when half the top is removed. It grows well in clay soil and tolerates poor drainage for a short period of time. It also is very tolerant of salt spray.

 Some other cultivars include: `Castlewellan`, a more compact form with gold-tipped leaves, excellent for hedges in cool climates; `Leighton Green`, dense branching with dark green foliage, columnar form; `Haggerston Gray`, loose branches, columnar-pyramidal, upturned at ends, sage-green color; `Silver Dust`, wide-spreading form with blue-green foliage marked with white variegations.

Propagation is by cuttings from side growths.

**Pests**
Bagworm can defoliate a tree in a week or two, and can be quite serious.

**Diseases**
A canker affects the tree following drought; a foliage fungus occasionally infects foliage. This plant is not recommended for planting in California due to the severity of this canker disease. Perhaps the disease will stay in the western United States.