Dragon's Claw Willow

Salix matsudana 'Tortuosa'



Dragon's Claw Willow in winter
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 30 feet

Spread: 25 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 4b

Description:

An unusual specimen tree prized for its gnarled, twisted branches, providing great winter interest; upright spreading habit, best used as a solitary for maximum effect; tends to drop branchlets, aggressive root system, so do not plant near homes

Ornamental Features

Dragon's Claw Willow is primarily valued in the landscape for its ornamental globe-shaped form. It has rich green deciduous foliage. The twisted narrow leaves turn yellow in fall. The twisted bark and gray branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Dragon's Claw Willow is a multi-stemmed deciduous tree with a more or less rounded form. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Dragon's Claw Willow is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade



Dragon's Claw Willow foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Dragon's Claw Willow will grow to be about 30 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 25 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 40 years or more.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It is an amazingly adaptable plant, tolerating both dry conditions and even some standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America.