

American Yellowwood (*Cladrastis kentukea* (prior name *C. lutea*))

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Summary:

Foliage: Deciduous broadleaf

Height: 50 feet

Spread: 55 feet

Shape: Vase-shaped

This vase-shaped medium tree has smooth bark and showy white flowers in the spring. It is also quite drought and alkaline soil tolerant.

Plant Needs:

Zone: 4 to 9

Light: Partial shade to full sun

Moisture: Moist to dry

Soil Type: Sandy, loam, or clay loam

pH Range: 4.5 to 8.0

Functions:

Suggested uses for this plant include shade tree and specimen plant.

Planting Notes:

Plant in well-drained, moist soil, preferably in full sun.

Tolerates wide range of soil pH.

Care:

Prune only in summer. Winter or spring pruning results in profuse bleeding. This species typically has a branch structure (tight branch angles) that results in limbs breaking from the tree. To avoid this, develop a good branch system in the tree's early life; as the tree ages, remove about 10% of small branches every other year to lighten the load of the major branch system.

Remove dead or damaged wood as soon as possible.

Problems:

No serious disease or insect problems.

Alternatives:

Consult garden centers, historic or public gardens and arboreta regarding cultivars and related species that grow well in your area.

Cultivars of *Cladrastis kentukea*

'Rosea' ('Perkins Pink') is a pink flowered cultivar.

Comments:

American yellowwood is a medium-sized tree with very showy, pendulous white, pea-like flowers in late spring.

This species will bloom heavily every other year. Even in years of a light bloom, it is prized for its form and tolerance of adverse conditions.

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