Catalpa, Purple

Catalpa x erubescens 'Purpurea'



Catalpa, Purple foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 60 feet

Spread: 40 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 5a

Description:

A large sized shade tree with huge leaves that are blackish-purple when young, maturing to dark green; very showy white flowers with purple and yellow markings in late spring; long narrow bean pod shaped fruit in fall and are reported as nontoxic.

Ornamental Features

Catalpa, Purple features showy panicles of fragrant white bell-shaped flowers with yellow eyes and purple spots rising above the foliage in late spring. It has attractive green foliage with hints of purple which emerges deep purple in spring. The enormous lobed leaves are highly ornamental and turn an outstanding yellow in the fall. The fruits are showy green pods which fade to brown over time, which are carried in abundance from mid summer to late winter. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up.

Landscape Attributes

Catalpa, Purple is a deciduous tree with a shapely oval form. Its strikingly bold and coarse texture can be very effective in a balanced landscape composition.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and is best pruned in late winter once the threat of extreme cold has passed. It is a good choice for attracting hummingbirds to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Messy

Catalpa, Purple is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade

Planting & Growing

Catalpa, Purple will grow to be about 60 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 40 feet. It has a high canopy of foliage that sits well above the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 70 years or more.

This tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. This plant should be periodically fertilized throughout the active growing season with a specially-formulated acidic fertilizer. It is not particular as to soil type or pH, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This particular variety is an interspecific hybrid.

Clean up Rating (1-5) 1=least effort 5=most effort

Clean Up Rating (4): Beautiful, large clusters of showy white, orchid-like flowers in early summer and long narrow bean-pods in fall are ornamental. Blooms, leaves and pods can be blown or raked onto the lawn and mowed or bagged.