Russian Cypress

Microbiota decussata

Height: 18 inches

Spread: 8 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 2

Other Names: Russian Arborvitae



Russian Cypress
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



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Description:

A little known but hardy wide-spreading groundcover evergreen, closely resembles a spreading juniper in shape but with the foliage of arborvitae; unlike juniper, performs very well in shade, also needs well-drained but moist soils and wind protection

Ornamental Features

Russian Cypress is a dwarf conifer which is primarily valued in the garden for its broadly spreading habit of growth. It has rich green evergreen foliage. The scale-like sprays of foliage turn coppery-bronze in the fall, which persists throughout the winter.

Landscape Attributes

Russian Cypress is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a ground-hugging habit of growth. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.

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

Russian Cypress is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Groundcover

Planting & Growing

Russian Cypress will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity, with a spread of 8 feet. It tends to fill out right to the ground and therefore doesn't necessarily require facer plants in front. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

This shrub performs well in both full sun and full shade. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.